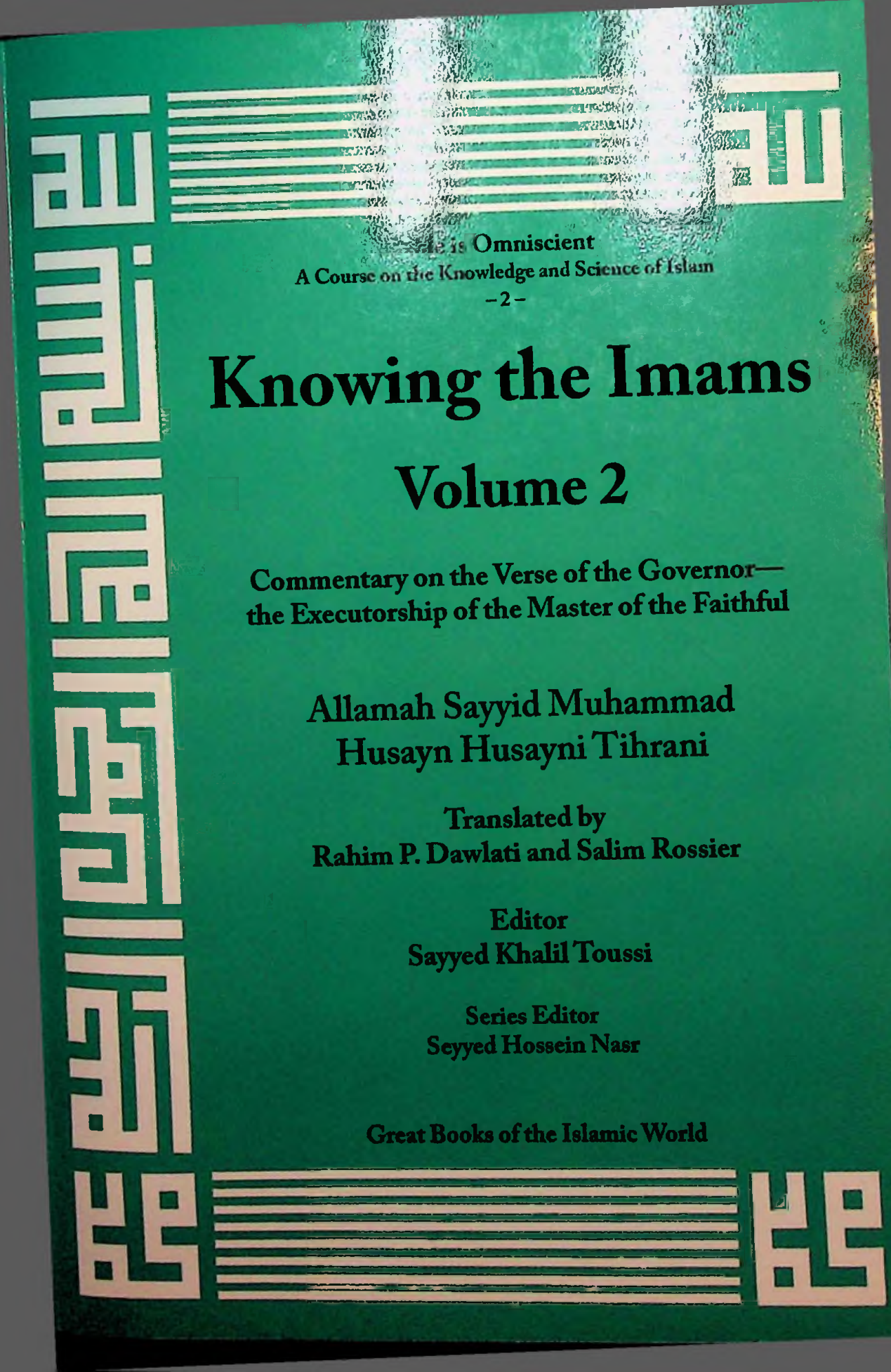
...e is Omniscient
A Course on the Knowledge and Science of Islam
–2–
Knowing the Imams
Volume 2
Commentary on the Verse of the Governor—
the Executorship of the Master of the Faithful
Allamah Sayyid Muhammad
Husayn Husayni Tihrani
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Great Books of the Islamic World

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– 2 –
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Knowing the Imams

Volume 2

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'Allāmah Sayyid Muhammad Ḥusayn Ḥusayni Ṭihrānī

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Note: While it is common in Persian or Arabic to place blessings on the Prophet or the Imams (you may find an "r" or something similar after the names of the Imams), it is not common practice in an English text. Readers should just say the phrase of blessings in their heart when they see reference to the Prophet or Imams.

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He is cherished

Knowing the Imams
Volume 2

The sessions of the month of Ramaḍān, from the 15th to the end of the month 1391 A.H.

Detailed explanation of the verse *Obey God, and obey the Prophet and those of you who are in authority;* explanation of Imam Ali's position as governor and status as brother.

CONTENTS

LESSON FIFTEEN: Commentary on the Verse ...*Obey God, and Obey the Prophet and Those of You Who Are in Authority* 3
Commentary on the Verse *Those...in Authority* 3
The Limits to the Authority of Those in Authority 6
The Need for Those in Authority to Be Infallible 7
Commentary on Those in Authority in *Hadiths* 7
Opinions on the Infallibility of Those in Authority 14
Some Wrongs Done to Ali 15

LESSON SIXTEEN: The Perfectness of the Master of the Faithful in All Merits 19
The Need to Obey Those in Authority Unconditionally 21
The Title of "The Master of the Faithful" is the Best Title for Ali ibn Abī Ṭālib 22
The Master of the Believers is the Most Perfect in All Merits 23
The Mass of Antithetical Attributes the Master of the Believers Had 26

LESSON SEVENTEEN: The Unanimous Opinions of the Infallible about Management 33
The Rulers' Crimes All Came About Because of People Involved in Politics 41
Mālik ibn Nuwayrah's Objection to Abū Bakr's Caliphate 46
Khālid ibn Walīd's Killing of Mālik ibn Nuwayrah and Committing of Adultery with His Wife 48
Abū Bakr's Defense of Khālid's Crimes 51

LESSON EIGHTEEN: The Imam Is a "United-with-the Unity-Status-Human," and the Qur'an Is A Guidance by the Imam 57
The Whole of Creation and All Creatures Are Based on the Truth 57
The Religious Laws Are Based on Monotheism 60
The Qur'an Is Guidance, but Only Through the Imam 62
The Position of the Imamate Is Only for the Devoted 65
Abū Bakr Admits His Weakness 66

LESSON NINETEEN: A Majority Vote Is Not the Criterion on Which an Infallible Imam Is Elected 71
The Majority's Inability to Elect the Imam 72
Verses in the Holy Qur'an That Say That Most People Go Astray 75
The Rightful Imam Is Necessary to Guide Those Who Have Strayed—Who Are the Majority 80

The Narration of Imam Riḍā Concerning the Condition of the Imams 91

LESSON TWENTY: The Imam Must Be the Most Virtuous and Have Authority Over the Nation 103

The Need for the Infallible Imam to Be Appointed in Accordance with the Rule of Divine Grace **103**

The Sunnis' Excuse for not Criticizing the Behavior of the Companions is Like the Pagans' Excuse **105**

An Explicit Statement by the Sunnis That the Imam Does Not Have to Be Infallible **110**

Fabricated Narrations on the Duty to Obey Tyrannical Rulers **111**

The Verses That Express the Followers of the Obedience of the Sinners **115**

The Imam Must Be the Best and Should Be in Charge of the Nation's Affairs **117**

A Fallible Person's Being in Charge of the Societal Affairs Always Leads to Slips and Deviation **118**

"Those in Authority" Have no Right to Make Religious Laws **119**

The Master of the Faithful's Criticism of the Usurpers of the Caliphate **122**

LESSON TWENTY-ONE: The Meaning of *Those in Authority* Is the Infallible Imams 127

Without the Household, God's Book Is Not Sufficient **127**

Ali's Full Knowledge of the Qur'an and his Struggle to Save It **129**

The Exegesis of *Those...in Authority* as the Imams and the Revelation of the Verse of Purification **130**

Mansūr ibn Dāzim's Reasoning for the Need for an Imam to Exist Who Understands the Meaning of the Qur'an **133**

Imam Sādiq's Companions' Debate with a Levantine about the Imamate **134**

The Sermon of the Master of the Faithful about the Status of Mohammad's Family **138**

The Sermon of the Master of the Faithful about Not Having Any Friends or Supporters **140**

They Take the Master of the Faithful to the Mosque by Force to Swear Allegiance **142**

LESSONS TWENTY-TWO TO TWENTY-FOUR: On the Infallibility Of the Prophets and the Imams, upon Them Be Peace 147

Sunni Challenges to Interpreting "Those...in Authority" as the Infallible Imams **148**

Explicit Statements in the Book of God and the Prophet's Sunnah about the Master of the Faithful's Guardianship 156
Abū Bakr's Acknowledgement of the Master of the Faithful's Superiority 160
The Prophet's Making of the Master of the Faithful His Brother 163
'Umar Rejects Ali's Being the Prophet's Brother 174

LESSONS TWENTY-FIVE TO THIRTY: The Appointment of the Master of the Faithful as Guardian by God's Messenger 179
Testamentary Instruction Is an Instinctive, Rational, and Religious Law 180
Guardianship Is the Most Important Essential of the Religion 181
God's Messenger's Appointment of the Master of the Faithful as Executor 182
The Hadith of Anas Concerning the Guardianship of the Master of the Faithful 189
Some Discussion on Anas' *Hadith* 191
Discussion of the Meaning of Anas' *Hadith* 194
A Number of Narrations on the Appointment by God's Messenger of the Master of the Faithful as Executor 202
Salmān Farsi's *Hadith* on the Appointment of an Executor 207
Every Prophet Has an Executor 210
Ali and I Were a Light before God, Mighty and Sublime Is He, before He Created Adam 212
The *Hadiths* That Say That Ali (as) Was the Successor, Vizier and Repayer of the Messenger's Debts in the Nation 214
'Alī's Virtues in 'Amr ibn al-'Āṣ's Words 216
The Star's Falling on Ali's House is a Sign of Executorship 228
Hadiths Indicating Ali's and His Offspring's Executorship 230
Sayyid Ḥimyari's Poetry 241
Ali's Executorship Was Not Just with Regard to God's Messenger's Personal Affairs 245

APPENDIX
List of Publications of 'Allāmah Sayyid Muhammad Ḥusayn Ḥusayni Ṭihrānī 251
Biography of the Author 259
Endnotes 267
Index of Qur'anic References 281
General Index 283

The Most Important Subjects and Selected Titles

This, the second volume of *Knowing the Imams*, is a commentary on *those in authority* and the Guardianship of Ali

1. The evidence for and extent of the authority, and the aim of following the one in charge
2. The duty to follow *those in authority*, and their infallibility
3. Imam Ali's surpassing of all others in all virtues
4. No one but sincere worshippers of God can achieve the position of Imamate.
5. The Imam cannot be elected through a vote.
6. The Imam must be superior and the first in dealing with the affairs of the nation; he must be assigned by God.
7. The verses indicating the unlawfulness of obeying sinners
8. The meaning of *those in authority* is the Infallible Imams.
9. A response to the Sunni challenge to the assertion that *those in authority* refers to the Infallible Imams
10. The laws and rules of the religion have supremacy over social customs.
11. Ali and the other Infallible Imams' successorship to the Prophet
12. Guardianship is the most important principle of religion.
13. The brotherhood of Ali with the Prophet in all aspects of life
14. The texts and statements on the governorship of Ali

Lesson Fifteen:
Commentary on the Verse

أَطِيعُوا اللَّهَ وَأَطِيعُوا الرَّسُولَ وَأُولِي الْأَمْرِ مِنكُمْ

...obey God, and obey the Prophet and those of you who are in authority

LESSON FIFTEEN

In the Name of God, the most Compassionate, the most Merciful
Blessing upon Mohammad and his infallible Household and God's curse on his enemies from now until the Day of Resurrection!
There is no power or strength except for the Lofty Glorious God.

The Wise God has stated in His Glorious Book:

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا أَطِيعُوا اللَّهَ وَأَطِيعُوا الرَّسُولَ وَأُولِي الْأَمْرِ مِنكُمْ فَإِن تَنَازَعْتُمْ فِي شَيْءٍ فَرُدُّوهُ إِلَى اللَّهِ وَالرَّسُولِ إِن كُنتُمْ تُؤْمِنُونَ بِاللَّهِ وَالْيَوْمِ الْآخِرِ ذَٰلِكَ خَيْرٌ وَأَحْسَنُ تَأْوِيلًا ....*O you who believe, obey God, and obey the Messenger and those of you who are in authority. Then if you have any quarrel on anything, refer to God and the Messenger if you believe in God and the Last Day—for that is better and becoming in the end.* (4:59)

Commentary on the Verse *Those...in Authority*

With regard to this blessed verse in which God addresses the believers, making it incumbent upon them to obey Him, His Messenger, and *those...in authority*, we consider who *those...in authority* are. What is the purpose of obeying them, and why should they be obeyed?

Is there a difference between obedience to God and obedience to His Prophet? Does God command and prohibit us through any other intermediaries apart from the Prophet? Must they then be obeyed? It is obvious that obedience to the Prophet is obedience to God and that God's commands are communicated by the Prophet. Thus, why are we given two separate commands to obey: one, to obey God, and the other to obey the Prophet?

Obeying God means following his commands sent down to the heart of the Prophet for the believers.

The Glorious Qur'an is the direct revelation and word of God for all people. Therefore, obeying God means obeying the word of God—that is, the Glorious Qur'an; however, there are two aspects to obedience to the Prophet.

First: obeying whatever commandments God has not explained in detail in the Book, but has explained to His Prophet. It is quite clear that in God's Book, general commands are given, such as primary

legislation, for example: prayer, fasting, *ḥajj*, *jihād*, *zakat*, marriage, transactions, and all other acts of worship and laws are all given in brief. However, detailed explanation of prayer, fasting, *ḥajj* and supplication is left to the Prophet.

The Prophet said: "Pray as you have seen me pray," meaning, God has made prayer incumbent on you, but watch how I pray. Pray as I do; that is, with regard to the orders, conditions, preliminaries, actions and compulsory formulae you recite in your prayer. These subjects are not explained in detail in the Qur'an; we are only told to obey the command, but the details have to be learnt from the Prophet of God.

The spirit of the Prophet, like a strong magnifying glass, takes those brief statements from the revealed scripture, magnifies and elucidates them, and then explains the terms of each prayer or command clearly to us.

The verses of the Qur'an were revealed to the Prophet and reflected within his heart in the same way; then, that holy being elucidated and interpreted those verses in detail. Subsequently, he reflected them outward, as stated:

وَأَنزَلْنَا إِلَيْكَ الذِّكْرَ لِتُبَيِّنَ لِلنَّاسِ مَا نُزِّلَ إِلَيْهِمْ

...and We sent down to you the Remembrance so that you may explain to mankind what was sent down to them (16:44)—to explain the commands, and state the aims of the verses.

In other words, it can be said that the details of the commands and problems are also separate revelations that are not in the Book brought down to the Prophet by Gabriel; thus, it is obvious that even explanations by the Prophet of these particulars are part of the legislation.[1]

Second: obedience to the Prophet in the personal opinions and personal commands concerning Muslim society—commands that bring about public order but are not legislation. Examples are government and the explanation of personal duties to the Muslims, appointing guardians and governors of towns, sending armies to *jihād*, and appointing judges and Imams to solve people's problems and disputes. God, the most High, has stated:

إِنَّا أَنزَلْنَا إِلَيْكَ الْكِتَابَ بِالْحَقِّ لِتَحْكُمَ بَيْنَ النَّاسِ بِمَا أَرَاكَ اللَّهُ

...Surely We have revealed to you the Book with the Truth in order that you may judge among people by means of what God has shown you... (4:105)

Of course this Command, in personal affairs, is as a decree. The Prophet had free rein in regulating important affairs such as recruiting armies, appointing division commanders, dispatching them to faraway lands, and entering into international treaties. Therefore, all Muslims had to accept his commands and obey him unconditionally. However, when facing the most complicated affairs, God commanded him to consult with the believers:

وَشَاوِرْهُمْ فِي الْأَمْرِ

...and consult with them on the matter. (3:159)

Nevertheless, the continuation is:

فَإِذَا عَزَمْتَ فَتَوَكَّلْ عَلَى اللهِ

...then, when you make a firm decision, rely on God (3:159; 4:64)

This allows the Prophet ultimately to do whatever he thinks best, even after consulting with the believers on important affairs. The Muslims simply have to obey him.

From the above, it is clear that even though obedience to the Prophet is like obedience to God, as per:

وَمَا أَرْسَلْنَا مِن رَّسُولٍ إِلَّا لِيُطَاعَ بِإِذْنِ اللهِ

...and We did not send any Messenger but to be obeyed with the permission of God.

Obeying God means one thing, and obeying His Messenger means another. Because of the commands of the Qur'an, it is incumbent upon people to obey God and obey the Messenger of God for explanations of the Qur'an, which are religious legislations and relevant to Muslims' personal affairs. It may be two distinct instructions to obey, with obedience to God distinct from obedience to His Messenger.

It is not as some exegetes say—that repetition in the Qur'an is for emphasis—because if unrepeated, the word would be easily understood. Rather, the use of the conjunction and the repetition of the word *obey*—obedience to God and obedience to the Prophet—indicate that there are two instructions to obey that are equally incumbent.

The Limits to the Authority of Those in Authority

However, *those...in authority* have absolutely no power to change legislation[2]: they are not like the Prophet, with the power to comment on or add to the secondary duties (*furū'*) imposed by the Qur'an; however, among the Muslims, they are the authoritative expounders of the commands and propagators of the verses according to the Prophet's legislation. They can also make decisions on Muslim affairs, direct opinions, and intervene in disputes between people and solve their problems. All people should follow them, and obedience to them is linked to obedience to the Prophet; that is why the imperative is not repeated and there are two objects with only a conjunction between them, i.e....*obey God, obey the Prophet and those among you who are in authority.* (4:59) Thus, unlike the instruction to obey the Prophet in this respect as well as with regard to his authority to comment on the details of legislations and commands, there is only an instruction here to obey them in this respect; the reason for this is that, immediately after this phrase, the Qur'an says:

فَإِن تَنَازَعْتُمْ فِي شَيْءٍ فَرُدُّوهُ إِلَى اللَّهِ وَالرَّسُولِ إِن كُنتُمْ تُؤْمِنُونَ بِاللَّهِ وَالْيَوْمِ الْآخِرِ

...then if you have any dispute over anything, refer to God and the Prophet if you believe in God and the Last Day. (4:59)

When a quarrel or a dispute erupts between the Muslims, they must refer to God's Book or the rules and *hadiths* of the Prophet, and by that means, settle their dispute. Here, it is clear that if *those in authority* have the power to interfere with the legislation, the litigants must be sent to them; but the Book does not say so, and so it is not sent to them.

To make it clear, we should say that those to whom this verse refers are the believers, because the beginning of the verse says *O you who believe*! Here, their quarrel is not with *those in authority*—because it would be irrational for dispute with them to be allowed after the premise that obedience to them has been made mandatory, and irrational to be referred to God and His Messenger to resolve that dispute.[3] *Dispute* has nothing to do with personal opinion but is over God's law, because the following verses reproach the people who are content with the commands of the devils and have chosen them as their reference, ignoring God and His Prophet's commands.

Here, *dispute* means the personal disputes that erupt between the Muslims. In these kinds of problems they should refer to God's Book and the laws and rules of the Prophet of God, because God's Book and the Prophet's rules and *hadiths* are two decisive proofs for settling the

differences of those who believe in them; the words of *those in authority* are also evidence of both. It is because the blessed verse approves them unconditionally. If they interpret the Book, and explain the rules and *hadiths*, they must be followed, because they do not add any extra rules or legislations. Therefore, we understand that there is no error in anything they say.[4]

The Need for *Those in Authority* to Be Infallible

In short, except with regard to prescriptive legislation, *those...in authority* should be followed unconditionally, and obedience to them is obedience to the Prophet. Their commands and prohibitions are the Prophet's commands and the Prophet's prohibitions. The Prophet's commands and prohibitions do not contradict God's commands and prohibitions—otherwise there would be differences between their commands and prohibitions. This is not all there is to say on the matter, but the main point is that the Prophet is infallible; similarly, there is no difference between commands and prohibitions issuing from *those...in authority* and those issuing from the Prophet. Otherwise, they would contradict each other. We cannot but conclude that *those...in authority* are infallible and accordingly have to be obeyed unconditionally. On the other hand, because we know that no Muslim sect claims its Imam is infallible except the Shi'a, who claim the twelve Imams are, the verse must mean the Infallible Imams.

This is the meaning of the blessed verse; there are countless *hadiths* about it, some of which also refer to the Verse of Purification.

Commentary on *Those in Authority* in Hadith

Tafsīr al-Būrhān and *Ghāyat al-Marām* relate on the authority of Muhammad ibn Yaʿqūb Kulāyni, via his chain of transmission from Abū Baṣīr:[5]

سَأَلْتُ أَبَا عَبْدِ اللهِ ع عَنْ قَوْلِ اللهِ عَزَّ وَ جَلَّ أَطِيعُوا اللهَ وَ أَطِيعُوا الرَّسُولَ وَ أُولِي الْأَمْرِ مِنْكُمْ فَقَالَ نَزَلَتْ
عَلِيُّ بْنُ أَبِي طَالِبٍ وَ الْحَسَنِ وَ الْحُسَيْنِ ع فَقُلْتُ لَهُ إِنَّ النَّاسَ يَقُولُونَ فَمَا لَهُ لَمْ يُسَمِّ عَلِيّاً وَ أَهْلَ بَيْتِهِ ع فِي
كِتَابِ اللهِ عَزَّ وَ جَلَّ فَقَالَ قُولُوا لَهُمْ إِنَّ رَسُولَ اللهِ ص نَزَلَتْ عَلَيْهِ الصَّلَاةُ وَ لَمْ يُسَمِّ اللهُ لَهُمْ ثَلَاثاً وَ لَا أَرْبَعاً
حَتَّى كَانَ رَسُولُ اللهِ ص هُوَ الَّذِي فَسَّرَ ذَلِكَ لَهُمْ وَ نَزَلَتْ عَلَيْهِ الزَّكَاةُ وَ لَمْ يُسَمِّ لَهُمْ مِنْ كُلِّ أَرْبَعِينَ دِرْهَماً دِرْهَمٌ
حَتَّى كَانَ رَسُولُ اللهِ ص هُوَ الَّذِي فَسَّرَ ذَلِكَ لَهُمْ وَ نَزَلَ الْحَجُّ فَلَمْ يَقُلْ لَهُمْ طُوفُوا أُسْبُوعاً حَتَّى كَانَ رَسُولُ اللهِ ص
هُوَ الَّذِي فَسَّرَ ذَلِكَ لَهُمْ وَ نَزَلَتْ أَطِيعُوا اللهَ وَ أَطِيعُوا الرَّسُولَ وَ أُولِي الْأَمْرِ مِنْكُمْ وَ نَزَلَتْ فِي عَلِيٍّ وَ الْحَسَنِ وَ
الْحُسَيْنِ فَقَالَ رَسُولُ اللهِ ص فِي عَلِيٍّ مَنْ كُنْتُ مَوْلَاهُ فَعَلِيٌّ مَوْلَاهُ

وَقَالَ ص أُوصِيكُمْ بِكِتَابِ اللَّهِ وَأَهْلِ بَيْتِي فَإِنِّي سَأَلْتُ اللَّهَ عَزَّ وَجَلَّ أَنْ لَا يُفَرِّقَ بَيْنَهُمَا حَتَّى يُورِدَهُمَا عَلَيَّ الْحَوْضَ فَأَعْطَانِي ذَلِكَ وَقَالَ لَا تُعَلِّمُوهُمْ فَهُمْ أَعْلَمُ مِنْكُمْ وَقَالَ إِنَّهُمْ لَنْ يُخْرِجُوكُمْ مِنْ بَابِ هُدًى وَلَنْ يُدْخِلُوكُمْ فِي بَابِ ضَلَالَةٍ فَلَوْ سَكَتَ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ ص فَلَمْ يُبَيِّنْ مَنْ أَهْلُ بَيْتِهِ لَادَّعَاهَا آلُ فُلَانٍ وَآلُ فُلَانٍ وَلَكِنَّ اللَّهَ عَزَّ وَجَلَّ أَنْزَلَهُ فِي كِتَابِهِ تَصْدِيقاً لِنَبِيِّهِ ص إِنَّمَا يُرِيدُ اللَّهُ لِيُذْهِبَ عَنْكُمُ الرِّجْسَ أَهْلَ الْبَيْتِ وَيُطَهِّرَكُمْ تَطْهِيراً فَكَانَ عَلِيٌّ وَالْحَسَنُ وَالْحُسَيْنُ وَفَاطِمَةُ ع فَأَدْخَلَهُمْ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ ص تَحْتَ الْكِسَاءِ فِي بَيْتِ أُمِّ سَلَمَةَ ثُمَّ قَالَ اللَّهُمَّ إِنَّ لِكُلِّ نَبِيٍّ أَهْلاً وَثَقَلاً وَهَؤُلَاءِ أَهْلُ بَيْتِي وَثَقَلِي فَقَالَتْ أُمُّ سَلَمَةَ أَلَسْتُ مِنْ أَهْلِكَ فَقَالَ إِنَّكِ إِلَى خَيْرٍ وَلَكِنَّ هَؤُلَاءِ أَهْلِي وَثَقَلِي.

I asked the Holy Imam about the interpretation of the verse *...obey God, and obey the Prophet and those of you who are in authority*, and he said:

> This verse was revealed about (*fi*) Ali ibn Abī Ṭālib and Ḥasan and Ḥusayn.

Then, I said: "But some people ask why the name of Ali and the Household are not mentioned in the verse. " [His] Holiness said:

> So ask them why when the verse of the prayer was sent down God did not state whether each prayer included three or four cycles of prostrations (*raka'āt*), until the Prophet interpreted the verse for the people and specified the numbers of cycles of prostrations in each unit. And when the verse of *zakat* (the due welfare taxes) was revealed it was not stated in the Book of God that one dirham out of [every] forty is payable until the Prophet translated the verse to the people and assigned the right amount of payment. Further, when the verse about the *ḥajj* pilgrimage was revealed, God did not state that they must perform seven circumambulations of the House until the Prophet explained that! And then the verse:

أَطِيعُوا اللَّهَ وَأَطِيعُوا الرَّسُولَ وَأُولِي الْأَمْرِ مِنْكُمْ.

Obey God, and obey the Prophet and those in authority among you.

> This was revealed about Ali, Ḥasan, and Ḥusayn. The Prophet said thereafter about Ali: "Whoever's Master I am, Ali is his Master." And he stated: "O people, I have enjoined you to the Book of God and my Household, and I have asked God, the Honorable and Exalted, not to separate them until He brings them to me by the Pool; He has granted me that."

He continued: "Do not teach them because they know better than you. They will never lead you out of the door of guidance and will never push you through the door of error."

Now, if the Prophet had kept silent and not explained who the People of his Household were, So-and-So's family and So-and-So's family would have claimed to be. However, God, the Honorable and Exalted, revealed in His Book, confirming His Messenger:

إِنَّمَا يُرِيدُ اللَّهُ لِيُذْهِبَ عَنكُمُ الرِّجْسَ أَهْلَ الْبَيْتِ وَيُطَهِّرَكُمْ تَطْهِيرًا

...surely, God wants to put away any impurity from you, the Household, and to purify you. (33:33)

Ali, Ḥasan, Ḥusayn, and Fāṭimah were there, and so the Messenger of God put them under the mantle at Umm Salamah's house, and then prayed: "O God, every Messenger has a family and household and these are my family and household." Thereafter, Umm Salamah asked: "O Prophet! Am I not part of your family?" The Prophet answered: "Surely you have a good future, but these are my family and household."

Then, the narrator continues telling a long story and explaining the other virtues of the Household.

Tafsīr al-Būrhān and *Ghāyat al-Marām* relate on the authority of Ibn Shahr Āshūb that Mujāhid's exegesis says about the verse on *those in authority*:

انها نزلت فی امیر المؤمنین علیه السلام حین خلفه رسول الله صلی الله علیه و آله و سلم بالمدینة فقال: یا رسول الله أتخلفنی علی النساء والصبیان؟ فقال: یا امیر المؤمنین اما ترضی ان تکون منی بمنزلة هارون من موسی حین قال له: «اخلفنی فی قومی واصلح»، فقال الله: «واولی الأمر منکم». قال: علی بن ابیطالب ولاه الله أمر

الأمة بعد محمد وحین خلفه رسول الله بالمدینة فأمر الله العباد بطاعته وترک خلافه

It was revealed about the Master of the Believers when the Prophet had left Ali ibn Abī Ṭālib in charge in Medina. Then, Ali asked: "O Prophet, are you leaving me in charge of the women and the children?" The Prophet said: "O Ali, are you not content to be to me to as Aaron was to Moses when [Moses] said to [Aaron]: 'Be my deputy among my people and do right'?" Then God sent down the verse: ... *and those in authority among you.*[6]

[Mujāhid] says: "God put Ali ibn Abī Ṭālib in charge of the nation after Mohammad's [passing] and when God's Messenger left him in

charge in Medina, so God commanded His servants to obey him and refrain from opposing him."

Tafsīr al-Būrhān and *Ghāyat al-Marām* say that Ibn Shahr Āshūb narrates from *Ibānah al-Falakī* that:

اطيعوا الله واطيعوا الرّسول واولي الامر منكم إنّها نزلت حين شكي ابو بريدة من علي عليه السّلام

...obey God, and obey the Prophet and those in authority among you.

This was revealed when Abū Buraydah complained about Ali.[7] The same is narrated by Mujāhid.

Tafsīr al-Būrhān says on the authority of Ṣadūq via his chain of transmission that Abū Baṣīr narrates on the authority of Imam Mohammad Bāqir, regarding God's words: *...obey God, and obey the Messenger and those of you who are in authority:*

الأئمّة من ولد عليّ و فاطمه صلوات الله عليهما الى أن تقوم السّاعة

The Imams from the offspring of Ali and Fāṭimah until the Hour comes.[8]

Tafsīr al-Mizān relates from *'Abaqāt al-Anwār, Yanābī' al-Mawaddah* and *Manāqib ibn Shahr Āshūb*, from Sūlaym ibn Qays al-Hilālī, a narration from Ali saying:

وَامّا الدّنى مَا يَكُونُ بِهِ الْعَبْدُ ضالّاً فَأَنْ لا يَعرِفَ حُجّةَ اللهِ تَبارَكَ وَتَعالى وَشاهِدَهُ عَلى عِبادِهِ، الَّذى امَرَ اللهُ عِبادَهُ بِطاعَتِهِ وَفَرَضَ وِلايَتَهُ. قالَ سُلَيْمٌ: قُلْتُ: يا اميرَ الْمُؤمنينَ صِفْهُمْ لى، قالَ: الَّذينَ قَرَنَهُمُ اللهُ بِنَفْسِهِ وَنَبِيِّهِ قالَ: يا اَيُّهَا الَّذينَ آمَنُوا اطيعُوا اللهَ وَاطيعُوا الرَّسُولَ وَاولى الْأَمْرِ مِنْكُمْ قُلْتُ لَهُ: جَعَلَنِيَ اللهُ فِداكَ أَوْضِحْ لى. قالَ: الَّذينَ قالَ رَسولُ اللهِ صلى الله عليه و آله وسلم فى مَواضِعَ وَفى آخِرِ خُطْبَتِهِ يَوْمَ قَبَضَهُ اللهُ اِلَيْهِ عَزَّوَجَلَّ: انّى تَرَكْتُ فيكُمْ أَمْرَيْنِ لَنْ تَضِلُّوا بَعْدى انْ تَمَسَّكْتُمْ بِهِما: كِتابَ اللهِ عَزَّوَجَلَّ، وَعِتْرَتى أَهْلَ بَيْتى، فَاِنَّ اللَّطيفَ الْخَبيرَ قَدْ عَهِدَ اِلَىَّ اَنَّهُما لَنْ يَفْتَرِقا حَتّى يَرِدا عَلَىَّ الْحَوْضَ كَهاتَيْنِ. وَجَمَعَ بَيْنَ مُسَبِّحَتَيْهِ. وَلا اقُولُ كَهاتَيْنِ. وَجَمَعَ بَيْنَ مُسَبِّحَتِهِ وَالْوُسْطى. فَتَمَسَّكُوا بِهِما وَلا تَقَدَّمُوهُمْ فَتَضِلُّوا.

The tiniest thing by which God's servant goes astray is not recognizing the Blessed and Transcendent God's proof and witness against the servants, whom God commanded the servants to obey and whose guardianship He imposed upon the servants.

[Sulaym says:] I said: "Master of the Faithful, describe them for me." He replied: "Those whom God has linked to Himself and His Prophet in saying: *O you who believe, obey God, and obey the Prophet and those in authority among you."*

[Sulaym says:] "I implored: May God make me a sacrifice to you, clarify [it] to for me." He replied:

Those about whom the Prophet said in various places including in his last sermon the day God, Mighty and Sublime is He, took him up to Himself:

> Surely, I have left two things with you to which if you cling you will never go astray: the Book of God, Mighty and Sublime is He, and, my family, the people of my household. Verily the Subtle, the Knowing, has promised me that they will not separate until they come to me at the Pool, just like these two. He put his two index fingers together. "I do not say like these two."
>
> He put his index and middle fingers together. "So cling to them. Do not go ahead of them or you will go astray."[9]

In relation to the verse:

اطيعوا الله واطيعوا الرّسول واولي الامر منكم.

Obey God, and obey the Prophet and those of you who are in authority,

Tafsīr al-Būrhān, *Ghāyat al-Marām*, and *Tafsīr al-Mizān*—citing *Tafsīr al-Būrhān*—quote Jābir ibn 'Abdullāh al-Anṣārī's narration, on the authority of the Prophet, counting the Immaculate Imams one by one and explaining the reason for the Mahdī, the executor from Mohammad's Household, going into hiding.[10] The *hadith* includes a great many clear points and the best subjects.

In any event, the applicability of *those in authority* to the Infallible Imams is such that in a *hadith*, Imam Ṣādiq has cursed those who try to discuss it, as narrated in *al-Būrhān*, *Ghāyat al-Marām* and *Tafsīr al-Mizān* from Muhammad ibn Ya'qūb Kulaynī in *al-Kāfī* on the authority of Abū Masrūq on the authority of Abū 'Abdullāh.

قالَ: قُلْتُ لَهُ: اتانكلم أهلَ الكلامِ فنحجّ عليهم بقولِ اللهِ عزَّوجلَّ: اطيعوا اللهَ واطيعوا الرَّسولَ و اولي الأمرِ منكم فيقولونَ: نزلَتْ في المؤمنينَ، ونحجّ عليهم بقولِ اللهِ عزَّوجلَّ: قُلْ لا اسئلكم عليه اجراً الّا المودّةَ في القربى، فيقولونَ: نزلَتْ في قُربى المسلمينَ، قالَ: فلَمْ أدعْ شيئاً مما حضرني ذكرُهُ من هذا و شبهِهِ الّا ذكرتُهُ، فقالَ لي: اذا كانَ ذلكَ فادعُهُمْ الى المباهلةِ، قُلْتُ: وكيفَ اصنعُ؟ فقالَ: أصلحَ نفسكَ ثلاثاً و أطيبُهُ، قالَ: وصُمْ واغتسِلْ وابرُزْ أنتَ وهوَ الى الجبالِ فتشبكُ أصابعَكَ من يدِكَ اليمنى في أصابعِهِ، ثُمَّ أنصفهُ وابدأ بنفسِكَ وقُلِ: اللّهُمَّ ربَّ السمواتِ السّبعِ وربَّ الأرضينَ السّبعِ عالمَ الغيبِ والشّهادةِ الرّحمنَ الرّحيمَ إنْ كانَ أبو مسروقٍ جحدَ حقّاً وادّعى باطلاً فأنزِلْ عليهِ حُسباناً من السّماءِ وعذاباً أليماً، ثُمَّ رُدَّ الدّعوةَ عليهِ

قُل: وَانْ جَحَدَ حَقّاً وَادَّعى باطِلاً فَانْزِلْ عَلَيهِ حُسْباناً مِنَ السَّماءِ وَعَذاباً أَلِيماً، ثُمَّ قالَ لي: فَانَّكَ لا تَلْبَثُ انْ تَرى ذلِكَ فيهِ، فَوَاللهِ ما وَجَدْتُ خَلْقاً يُجيبُني اليه.

[Abū Masrūq] says:

> I said to [the Holy Imam Sādiq]: "We speak to theologians and argue with them on the basis of God's words, Mighty and Sublime is He: *obey God, and obey the Prophet and those of you who are in authority*," but they reply" "It was revealed about the believers." We argue with them on the basis of God's words, Mighty and Sublime is He: *I do not demand you any reward for it except love for the close relatives*, but they say: "It was revealed about [all] Muslims' close relatives."

Abū Masrūq says: "I did not fail to tell him anything I remembered of this and similar [matters]."

[The Holy Imam] said: "If it is so, then invite them to a prayer-duel."

I asked: "How do I?" The Holiness said:

> Improve and purify yourself for three days. Fast, bathe, go out with him to the mountains, and interlock the fingers of your right hand with his fingers. Then be fair to him and start with yourself—say:
>
> > O God, Lord of the seven heavens and the seven earths, Knower of the Unseen and the visible, the Beneficent, the Merciful. If Abū Masrūq has denied a truth, and claimed a falsehood, then send calamity and painful punishment down upon him from Heaven.
>
> Then, turn the prayer against him and say: "If he has denied a truth and claimed a falsehood, send calamity and painful punishment down on him from Heaven."

[The Holy Imam] then said to me: "You will soon see it in him."

By God, I have found no one to accept my invitation to [a prayer-duel].

Al-Kāfī says via its chains of narration that Imam Bāqir said:

السّاعَةُ الَّتي تُباهَلُ فيها ما بَيْنَ طُلُوعِ الْفَجْرِ الى طُلُوعِ الشَّمْسِ.

The time in which to prayer-duel is between dawn and sunrise.[11]

Hākim Ḥasakāni cites via his chains of narration Abān ibn Abī 'Ayyāsh:

قَالَ: حَدَّثَنِي سُلَيْمُ بْنُ قَيْسٍ الْهِلَالِيُّ عَنْ عَلِيٍّ قَالَ: قَالَ رَسُولُ اللهِ صلى الله عليه و آله وسلم: شُرَكَائِيَ الَّذِينَ قَرَنَهُمُ اللهُ بِنَفْسِهِ وَبِي وَأَنْزَلَ فِيهِمْ:
يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا أَطِيعُوا اللهَ وَأَطِيعُوا الرَّسُولَ الآيَةَ فَإِنْ خِفْتُمْ تَنَازُعاً فِي أَمْرٍ فَارْجِعُوهُ إِلَى اللهِ وَالرَّسُولِ وَأُولِي الْأَمْرِ. قُلْتُ: يَا نَبِيَّ اللهِ مَنْ هُمْ؟ قَالَ: أَنْتَ أَوَّلُهُمْ

Sūlaym ibn Qays Hilālī related to me that Ali ibn Abī Ṭālib said to him:

The Prophet stated:

> My companions are those whom God has linked to Himself and to me and about whom He has revealed *O you who believe, obey God, and obey the Prophet*...So, if you fear dispute over a matter, refer it to God, the Messenger and those in authority.

I then asked: "O Prophet, who are those in authority?" He said: "You are the first of them."[12]

Tafsīr al-Mīzān cites *Tafsīr al-Ayyāshī* on the authority of 'Umar ibn Sa'īd, that Abū al-Hasan said that the verse:

أَطِيعُوا اللهَ وَأَطِيعُوا الرَّسُولَ وَأُولِي الْأَمْرِ مِنْكُمْ قَالَ: عَلِيُّ بْنُ أَبِي طَالِبٍ وَالْأَوْصِيَاءُ مِنْ بَعْدِهِ

Obey God, and obey the Prophet and those of you who are in authority

[means] Ali ibn Abī Ṭālib and the executors after him.[13]

It is related by Ibn Shahr Āshūb that al-Hasan ibn Ṣāliḥ asked Imam Sādiq about this, and he said: "They are the Imams from the Household of the Prophet."

So far, we have cited some of the discursive exegeses of *those in authority* and the other narrations that explain the meaning of *those in authority*. (For further details, consult *Tafsir al-Būrhān* under the verse

أَطِيعُوا اللهَ وَأَطِيعُوا الرَّسُولَ وَأُولِي الْأَمْرِ مِنْكُمْ

Obey God, and obey the Prophet and those of you who are in authority,

and *Ghāyat al-Marāmı,* which relates four Sunni and four Shi'a narrations. One should also refer to *Yanābī' al-Mawaddah*. Thus, it has become clear that *those in authority* are the Infallible Imams.

Opinions on the Infallibility of Those in Authority

It is strange, but as will be explained more fully later on, even though Imam Fakhr Rāzī accepts the need for *those in authority* to be infallible, he says:

> Infallibility or being free from error is achieved through consultation (*shurā*). In other words, the individual members of the council are not individually infallible or free from error, but through exchanging ideas, the members of the council are collectively protected from error, and the council is infallible.

God willing, we will explain in detail how baseless this is, but here, explanation of a small point suffices. That is, if the members of a council collectively generate infallibility, then why did 'Uthmān, who was appointed to the council by 'Umar, make so many mistakes? Why have the greatest historians recorded in their books so many errors, social crimes, and breaches of weak Muslims' rights?

'Uthmān burned the Qur'an, tore apart 'Ammār ibn Yāsir's stomach, and kicked him so hard that he fainted, fell on the ground, and developed a hernia, even though the position of 'Ammār, the great follower of the Prophet, was clear to all. The Prophet said about him:

عَمَّارٌ مَعَ الْحَقِّ وَالْحَقُّ مَعَ عَمَّارٍ حَيْثُ كَانَ، عَمَّارٌ جِلْدَةٌ مَا بَيْنَ عَيْنِي وَأَنْفِي

'Ammār is with the Truth and the Truth is with 'Ammār; 'Ammār is the skin between my eyes and nose.[14]

It was clear to everyone that 'Uthmān lashed 'Abdullāh ibn Mas'ūd for not giving 'Uthmān the Qur'an he had compiled; 'Uthmān also injured Abū Dharr al-Ghifārī, the noble follower of the Prophet, about whose dignity and position the Prophet had often spoken.

He summoned him from the Levant to Medina for his frank speech—publicly enjoining what was right and forbidding what was wrong. He made him ride on a fast-running camel with no saddle, and from there sent him to Rabadhah without any food or shelter; on the way there, he died in the middle of an unknown barren desert.

'Uthmān shared the Muslims' public treasury among the commanders and Umayyads who were his relatives and friends. He tortured the Muslims; gave away Fadak to Khālid ibn Walīd; and gave away the inheritance of Fāṭimah, the Prophet's daughter, to that cruel, audacious man. 'Uthmān recalled Ḥakam to Medina, even though he had been exiled by the Prophet, and handed the revenue of Africa over to him at a social event.

The Master of the Faithful told 'Uthmān by way of advice:

وَإِنَّ شَرَّ النَّاسِ عِنْدَ اللهِ إِمَامٌ جَائِرٌ ضَلَّ وَضُلَّ بِهِ، فَأَمَاتَ سُنَّةً مَأْخُوذَةً وَأَحْيَا بِدْعَةً مَتْرُوكَةً، وَإِنِّي سَمِعْتُ رَسُولَ اللهِ صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَآلِهِ يَقُولُ يُؤْتَى يَوْمَ الْقِيَامَةِ بِالْإِمَامِ الْجَائِرِ وَلَيْسَ مَعَهُ نَصِيرٌ وَلَا عَاذِرٌ فَيُلْقَى فِي جَهَنَّمَ فَيَدُورُ فِيهَا كَمَا تَدُورُ الرَّحَى، ثُمَّ يَرْتَبِطُ فِي قَعْرِهَا

Certainly the worst man in the sight of God is an unjust leader who goes astray, and by whom [others are] led astray, killing a followable custom and reviving an obsolete innovation.

Certainly I heard God's Messenger say: "On the Day of Resurrection, an unjust leader will be brought without anyone to help or make excuses. Thereafter, he will be tossed into Hell where he will turn, the way a handmill does. He will then be tied in its pit."[15]

Some Wrongs Done to Ali

In most of his sermons, letters, and narrations, the Master of the Faithful complains about the oppression suffered through his right, the guardianship being usurped. Moreover, the people did not allow matters to follow their natural course; he knew well that the government did not submit to the rightful guardian, and he felt sorry for the abject people who had turned away from the Book of God and the rules and *hadiths* of the Prophet.

In many places in *Nahj al-Balāghah*, he refers to the very subject and says:

حَتَّى إِذَا قَبَضَ اللهُ رَسُولَهُ صلى الله عليه و آله وسلم رَجَعَ قَوْمٌ عَلَى الْأَعْقَابِ وَغَالَتْهُمُ السُّبُلُ وَاتَّكَلُوا عَلَى الْوَلَائِجِ وَوَصَلُوا غَيْرَ الرَّحِمِ، وَهَجَرُوا السَّبَبَ الَّذِي أُمِرُوا بِمَوَدَّتِهِ، وَنَقَلُوا الْبِنَاءَ عَنْ رَصِّ أَسَاسِهِ، فَبَنَوْهُ فِي غَيْرِ مَوْضِعِهِ، مَعَادِنُ كُلِّ خَطِيئَةٍ وَأَبْوَابُ كُلِّ ضَارِبٍ فِي غَمْرَةٍ، قَدْ مَارُوا فِي الْحَيْرَةِ وَذَهَلُوا فِي السَّكْرَةِ عَلَى سُنَّةٍ مِنْ آلِ فِرْعَوْنَ مِنْ مُنْقَطِعٍ إِلَى الدُّنْيَا رَاكِنٍ أَوْ مُفَارِقٍ لِلدِّينِ مُبَايِنٍ

It was when God took His Prophet [to Him] that a group of people turned on their heels. The ways [of misguidance] ruined them and they placed trust in deceitful intriguers, maintained good relations with others instead of the kinsmen, cut off the kin whom they had been enjoined to love, abandoned the means that they were enjoined to love, shifted the structure from its strong foundation, and built it out of its [proper] place.

They are the source of every shortcoming and the door of gropers in the dark.

They were moving to and fro in amazement and lay intoxicated in the way of the people of the Pharaohs. They were either bent on this world and taking support on it or away from the faith or removed from it.[16]

And in a letter to Mālik Ashtar, he added:

فَلَمّا مَضى صلى الله عليه و آله وسلم (يعنى محمدا) تَنازَعَ الْمُسْلِمُونَ الْأَمْرَ مِنْ بَعْدِهِ. فَوَاللهِ مَا كانَ يُلْقى فى رُوعى وَلا يَخْطُرُ بِبالى أَنَّ الْعَرَبَ تُزْعِجُ هذَا الْاَمْرَ مِنْ بَعْدِهِ صلى الله عليه و آله وسلم عَنْ أَهْلِ بَيْتِهِ، وَلا أَنَّهُمْ مُنَحُّوهُ عَنّى مِنْ بَعْدِهِ، فَما راعَنى إِلَّا انْثِيالُ النّاسِ عَلى فُلانٍ يُبايِعُونَهُ، فَأَمْسَكْتُ يَدى حَتّى رَأَيْتُ راجِعَةَ النّاسِ قَدْ رَجَعَتْ عَنِ الْإِسْلامِ يَدْعُونَ الى مَحْقِ دينِ مُحَمَّدٍ صلى الله عليه و آله وسلم فَخَشيتُ انْ لَمْ اَنْصُرِ الْاِسْلامَ وَأَهْلَهُ أَنْ أَرى فيهِ ثَلْماً أَوْ هَدْماً تَكُونُ الْمُصيبَةُ بِهِ عَلَىَّ أَعْظَمَ مِنْ فَوْتِ وِلايَتِكُمُ الَّتى إِنَّما هِىَ مَتاعُ أَيّامٍ قَلائِلَ يَزُولُ مِنْها ما كانَ كَما يَزُولُ السَّرابُ أَوْ كَما يَتَقَشَّعُ السَّحابُ، فَنَهَضْتُ فى تِلْكَ الْأَحْداثِ حَتّى زاحَ الْباطِلُ وَزَهَقَ، وَاطْمَأَنَّ الدّينُ وَتَنَهْنَهَ.

When [the Prophet] passed away, Muslims quarreled about leadership—the Governorship and the Imamate—after him. By God, it would never have been cast into my heart or occurred to me that the Arabs would separate the Governorship and the Imamate from the Household or take it away from me after [God's Messenger] died. The people's rushing to [Abū Bakr] to swear allegiance to him was a complete surprise to me. Thus, I stayed my hand until I saw the return of the people who had turned away from Islam inviting [others] to damage the religion of Mohammad. I then feared if I did not support Islam and its followers, I would see a gap or destruction in it through which the loss to me would be greater than missing out on ruling you, which would last a few days and then disappear as an illusion, or, like the clouds in the sky, it would be cut into pieces and disperse. Therefore, I rose at that situation, the wrong went away and came to nothing, and the religion was assured and secured.[17]

Lesson Sixteen:
The Perfectness of the Master of the Faithful in All Merits

LESSON SIXTEEN

In the Name of God, the Compassionate, the Merciful
On the infallibility of the Prophet and the Imams, peace be upon them
God bless Mohammad and his immaculate Household, and God's curse upon his enemies from now until the Day of Resurrection! There is no power or strength save through God, the High, the Great.

The Wise God has stated in His Glorious Book:

يا أيها الذين آمنوا أطيعوا الله وأطيعوا الرسول وأولي الأمر منكم فإن تنازعتم في شيء فردوه إلى الله والرسول إن كنتم تؤمنون بالله واليوم الآخر ذلك خير وأحسن تأويلا.

O you who believe, obey God, and obey the Messenger and those of you who are in authority. Then if you have any dispute over anything, refer to God and the Messenger if you believe in God and the Last Day—for that is better and more seemly in the end. (4:59)

It was stated above that in this verse, *those in authority* means the Immaculate Imams. According to the verse, obedience to them is mandatory. The verse links them to the Prophet, so it means they must be infallible. Even if, hypothetically, they are not infallible and act contrary to what the Prophet says, they need to be obeyed just because God has commanded so. However, on the one hand they would be enjoining God's commands and the Prophet's instructions, and on the other hand, rejecting it with their words and deeds—this is impossible.

Those in authority are the people whose words and deeds are not contrary to the Book or the Prophet's rules and *hadiths*. Their words and actions are approved by the people, and this is the sign of their infallibility. Because everyone in Muslim society—both Shi'a and non-Shi'a—believes that no one except the Imams is infallible, the above verse imposes an obligation of obeying the Infallible Imams.

Some Sunnis believe[18] that this verse does not mean that either the Prophet or *those in authority* are infallible.

However, if this verse does not prove the infallibility of the Prophet, it is a different matter; the verse could still mean that *those in authority* do not necessarily have to be infallible. In other words, the verse only makes obedience to *those in authority* necessary for the sake of Muslim unity—like treaties that unite nations. Those assemblies choose their own chiefs and leaders, giving them authority and making the nation

obey them. Then, if a leader deliberately rebels and acts against the rules of that assembly, they do not follow him any more, because they have chosen him to protect the rules, and not as a legislator. If that ruler makes a mistake, they do not have to obey him and even have a duty to make him aware of his mistakes; however, if there is uncertainty over whether he has made a mistake, to safeguard the government and ensure unity among the people, they have to settle the matter—in this verse too, *those in authority* have the same authority among the nations. If there is no doubt that in a given matter they have acted against the will of God, they must not be followed, because of stipulations such as:

انَّ اللهَ لا يَأمُرُ بِالفَحشآءِ.

God does not enjoin indecency. (7:28)

and the Prophet's words:

لا طاعَةَ لِمَخلُوقٍ فى مَعصِيَةِ الخالِقِ

There is no obedience to a creature in disobedience of the Creator.[19]

Both the Shi'a and Sunnis narrate that it is attributable to the Prophet, as is:

لا طاعةَ إلّا في المعروفِ

There is no obedience except in what is proper,[20]

along with some other [quotations] that make exceptions to the duty to obey them; moreover, if they make a mistake in their commands, they must be seen to refer to the Book and *hadiths*. It is only when it is confirmed that they have made a mistake. Otherwise it does not matter, because they know that what they are doing is for the benefit of Islam and the Muslims, and it is better to follow them.

However, after careful consideration of the revelation and the style of the blessed verse, there is no room for doubt, that is, even though one could doubt the common people; in the case of a certain error their mistakes come to light, and in a probable mistake it is ignored for the benefit of the society. There is similar evidence pertaining to the Prophet's chief commanders whom he sent for *jihād*, and the governors he or Ali, the Master of the Faithful, appointed to the cities and a *mujtahid's* ruling being binding on his follower, and such evidence can also be found in the *hadiths* and narrations. However, reliance on this verse as evidence of the infallibility of *those in authority* is one thing, and

its having been revealed concerning the duty to obey them is something else. The two are not concomitant to each other. We choose to give the commanders and the chiefs the benefit of the doubt when we are not sure if they are right, but what we say is that the revelation of the blessed verse does not come close to proving their infallibility. (End of the summary of the Sunni argument)

The Need to Obey Those in Authority Unconditionally

The revealed meaning of the noble verse is to follow them unconditionally. This is impossible without their being infallible, because the style of the verse does not fit another interpretation. The verse links the need to obey *those in authority* with obedience to the Prophet and to God; just as obedience to God and the Prophet is unconditional, the instruction to obey *those in authority*, which is worded the same way, is unconditional. If any qualification were intended, it would be joined to this sentence and it would qualify the need to obey or not obey. At the very least, there would be another verse in the Qur'an to clarify, such as:

لا تطيعوا أمرهم في مخالفة الله.

Do not obey their command in disobedience to God.

Even

إِنَّ اللهَ لَا يَأْمُرُ بِالْفَحْشَاءِ

...indeed, God does not command any indecency. (7:28)

Similar verses are unrelated to this one; a prophetic *hadith* alone could not suffice to qualify an unqualified command to obey *those in authority* if it means those prone to sin. The general rule is that a commandment is only qualified when the qualifier can qualify it completely, but if the qualifier cannot qualify it, it means that it is unqualifiable. Moreover, we see that in many less important affairs too, God has made it obligatory to obey *those in authority*, but only on condition that they do not command those under their authority to sin.

Concerning being kind to and obeying parents, God, the most High, states:

وَوَصَّيْنَا الْإِنسَانَ بِوَالِدَيْهِ حُسْنًا وَإِن جَاهَدَاكَ لِتُشْرِكَ بِي مَا لَيْسَ لَكَ بِهِ عِلْمٌ فَلَا تُطِعْهُمَا.

...and We have enjoined man to treat his parents kindly, but if they should urge you to associate with Me one that you have no knowledge about, then do not obey them! (29:8)

Concerning this, which expresses the duty to obey parents, He immediately cuts it short by saying: "Unless it is rebellion against God."

Now, which is more important, this or government of all Muslims?

If the verse of *those in authority* were qualified, it would be by way of an adjunct contextual indicator, but as it is, it indicates that obedience to *those in authority* is absolute, the style of the sentence not allowing any other possibility. Thus, the clarity of the verse proves their infallibility:

وهذا واضحٌ لِمَنْ تَدَبَّرَ وَالْحَمْدُ لِلّٰه

...and this is apparent to those who ponder and praise be to God.

The Title of "The Master of the Faithful" is the Best Title for Ali ibn Abī Ṭālib

The phrase *those in authority* (*ūli al-amr*) is plural. It means those in charge. The second person pronominal suffixes refer to the believers, because God states: "those *of you* who are in authority." The Master of the Faithful is the first title that the Prophet gave Ali ibn Abī Ṭālib, with God's permission; because the singular form of "those *of you* who are in authority" means he who is in charge of the believers, it refers to the Master of the Faithful, who is in charge. This is the Holy Imam's most important title; it is more important than "The Chief of the Muslims" (*Sayyid al-Muslimīn*), "The Drone of the Religion" (*Ya'sūb al-Dīn*), "The Leader of the Bright-Faced and White-footed" (*Qā'id al-Ghurr al-Muḥajjalīn*), "The Imam of the God-fearing" (*Imām al-Muttaqīn*), "The Slayer of the Wicked" (*Qātil al-Fajarah*), "The Messenger's Successor" *Khalīfat al-Rasūl*, "The Guardian" (*al-Walī*), "The Vizier" (*al-Wazīr*), and so on. The initial title is the most important, and the Prophet commanded the people to greet the Master of the Faithful and address him by this title.

This title is not validation but rather an expression of fact. It was a secret and came to the Holy Imam in the presence of the Prophet. When the title of the chief and commander becomes attached to a name, it becomes its virtue: the commander of the army means he is expert in controlling the army, and is the Amir of the Amirs, meaning he has authority over the nations.

Ali, the Master of the Faithful, means that in terms of belief, he is the Chief and the Master of the Faithful. Ibn 'Abbās says about the matter:

قال رسول الله: ما أنزل الله آية فيها «يا أيها الذين آمنوا» إلا وعلي رأسها وأميرها.

The Prophet said: God has not revealed any verse beginning with *O you who believe...* without Ali's being its chief and master.[21]

Moreover, Ibn Shahr Āshūb relates from the Sunnis:

قال مجاهد في تفسيره: ما كان في القرآن يا أيها الذين آمنوا فإن لعلي عليه السلام سابقة ذلك لأنه سبقهم إلى الإسلام فسماه الله في تسع وثمانين موضعاً أمير المؤمنين وسيد المخاطبين إلى يوم الدين.

Mujāhid says in his exegesis: "Ali was the first of every *O you who believe...* in the Qur'an, because he came to Islam earlier than they did, and in ninety-eight different places God named him the Master of the Faithful, and the Master of those addressed until the Day of Resurrection."[22]

Thus, wherever the Qur'an says: *O you who believe...* it is either for the believers or in the praise of the Master of the Believers—God has praised the believers with certain attributes and placed the Master of the Believers on top.

The Master of the Believers is the Most Perfect in All Merits

Now with this title, it can be understood that in all aspects—perfection of the soul, morality, generosity, virtue, belief and desire for Unity—the Holy Imam was the most perfect. He must certainly be the most ascetic, that is the attribute of the believers; otherwise he cannot have the title of Amir. If we assume that the asceticism of just one person in the nation is greater than or equal to the Holy Imam's, the Holy Imam cannot be his Amir. The same applies to all other good attributes, such as generosity, forgiveness, mercifulness, tolerance, knowledge, patience, prayer, fasting, *jihād*, judgment, commanding, fairness, purity of mind, cleanliness of heart, Divine knowledge, awareness of secrets, having God's attributes and Holy Names, reaching the rank of "those close to Him," the righteous and martyrs, the illumination of the Essence of Unity, and the stages of life and death. All these were with that Holy Imam because of his nobility and the title of Leadership; and he preceded everyone in all of them.

Towards the end of *Surah al-Furqān*, God, the most High, mentions fourteen of His servants' attributes:

وعِبادُ الرَّحمنِ الَّذينَ يَمشُونَ عَلَى الأَرضِ هَوناً وَاذا خاطَبَهُمُ الجاهِلُونَ قالُوا سَلاماً
وَالَّذينَ يَبيتُونَ لِرَبِّهِم سُجَّداً وَقِياماً
وَالَّذينَ يَقُولُونَ رَبَّنَا اصرِف عَنَّا عَذابَ جَهَنَّمَ إنَّ عَذابَها كانَ غَراماً
انَّها ساءَتْ مُستَقَرّاً وَمُقاماً
وَالَّذينَ اذا انفَقُوا لَم يُسرِفُوا وَلَم يَقتُرُوا وَكانَ بَينَ ذلِكَ قَواماً
وَالَّذينَ لا يَدعُونَ مَعَ اللهِ الهاً آخَرَ وَلا يَقتُلُونَ النَّفسَ الَّتي حَرَّمَ اللهُ إلّا بِالحَقِّ وَلا يَزنُونَ وَمَن يَفعَل
ذلِكَ يَلقَ اثاماً

...and the sincere believers of God, the Mercy-giving, are those who walk modestly on the land, and when the foolish address them they gently respond to them in peace. And those who spend their nights prostrating or standing [before their Lord], and those who say: Our Lord, secure us from the chastisement of Hell, for indeed its chastisement is everlasting. It is indeed evil as an abode and place; and those who, when they expend, they neither do it lavishly nor hold it back, but keep to a happy medium. And those who do not call on other deities along with God, nor ever kill anyone whom God has forbidden except through the law; and do not sexually misbehave: for whoever does so, receives a penalty. (25:63–68)

And in all these areas, Ali ibn Abī Ṭālib is the master and pioneer; the same applies to 25:72–74:

وَالَّذينَ لا يَشهَدُونَ الزُّورَ وَاذا مَرُّوا بِاللَّغوِ مَرُّوا كِراماً
وَالَّذينَ اذا ذُكِّرُوا بِآياتِ رَبِّهِم لَم يَخِرُّوا عَلَيها صُمّاً وَعُمياناً
وَالَّذينَ يَقُولُونَ رَبَّنا هَب لَنا مِن ازواجِنا وَذُرِّيّاتِنا قُرَّةَ أَعيُنٍ وَاجعَلنا لِلمُتَّقينَ اماماً

...and those who do not bear false witness, and when they pass by [people] gossiping, pass by in a dignified manner, those who when they are reminded of their Lord by signs, do not fall down deaf and blind at them; and who say: "Our Lord, bestow the comfort of our eyes on us in our spouses and our offspring. Make us a Leader for the God-fearing." (25:72–74)

There is implicit reference to Ali ibn Abī Ṭālib throughout these verses as the Commander and Leader; there is also reference to him in other verses:

وَالَّذينَ آمَنُوا أَشَدُّ حُبّاً لِلّهِ

...and those who believe, have the strongest love for God. (2:165)

وَالَّذِينَ آمَنُوا وَهَاجَرُوا وَجَاهَدُوا فِي سَبِيلِ اللهِ وَالَّذِينَ آوَوا وَّنَصَرُوا أُولَئِكَ هُمُ الْمُؤْمِنُونَ حَقًّا لَّهُم مَّغْفِرَةٌ وَرِزْقٌ كَرِيمٌ

...and those who have believed and migrated, and struggled for the sake of God, and also those who have granted them asylum and supported (them), are truly believers; they have forgiveness and full provision. (8:74)

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا إِن تَتَّقُوا اللهَ يَجْعَل لَّكُمْ فُرْقَانًا

...O you who believe, if you are heedful of God, He will grant you a Criterion. (8:29)

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا إِذَا لَقِيتُمْ فِئَةً فَاثْبُتُوا

...O you who believe, when you encounter forces, hold firm. (8:45)

يُثَبِّتُ اللهُ الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا بِالْقَوْلِ الثَّابِتِ فِي الْحَيَاةِ الدُّنْيَا وَفِي الآخِرَةِ

...God confirms with firm speech those who believe, in this world and in the Hereafter. (14:27)

وَبَشِّرِ الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا أَنَّ لَهُمْ قَدَمَ صِدْقٍ عِندَ رَبِّهِمْ

...and spread news to those who believe that they are on a sound footing with their Lord. (10:2)

لِيَجْزِيَ الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا وَعَمِلُوا الصَّالِحَاتِ بِالْقِسْطِ

...to reward those who believe and do honorable deeds in fairness. (10:4)

الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا وَتَطْمَئِنُّ قُلُوبُهُم بِذِكْرِ اللهِ أَلَا بِذِكْرِ اللهِ

...those who believe and their hearts are certain by remembering God. (13:28)

يَرْفَعِ اللهُ الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا مِنكُمْ وَالَّذِينَ أُوتُوا الْعِلْمَ دَرَجَاتٍ

...God may promote those of you who believe and those who have been granted knowledge. (58:11)

إِنَّ الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا وَعَمِلُوا الصَّالِحَاتِ لَهُمْ أَجْرٌ غَيْرُ مَمْنُونٍ

...surely those who have believed and done honorable deeds will have such reward that it will never be withheld from them. (41:8)

إِنَّ الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا وَعَمِلُوا الصَّالِحَاتِ أُولَٰئِكَ هُمْ خَيْرُ الْبَرِيَّةِ

...indeed those who have believed and done honorable deeds are the best of the creatures. (98:7)

إِلَّا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا وَعَمِلُوا الصَّالِحَاتِ وَتَوَاصَوْا بِالْحَقِّ وَتَوَاصَوْا بِالصَّبْرِ

...except for those who believe, and do honorable deeds and encourage one another unto the Truth; and recommend to one another to be patient. (103:3)

وَالْمُقِيمِي الصَّلَاةِ وَمِمَّا رَزَقْنَاهُمْ يُنفِقُونَ

...and those who say their prayers and spend something out of what We have provided them with. (22:35)

وَيَدْرَؤُونَ بِالْحَسَنَةِ السَّيِّئَةَ وَمِمَّا رَزَقْنَاهُمْ يُنفِقُونَ

...and ward off the evil with good, and spend out some of what We have provided them. (28:54)

يَدْعُونَ رَبَّهُمْ خَوْفًا وَطَمَعًا وَمِمَّا رَزَقْنَاهُمْ يُنفِقُونَ.

...they call upon their Lord in fear and anticipation, and spend what We have provided them with. (32:16)

There are many other similar verses in the Holy Qur'an. Of course, the matter under discussion is only those verses describing attributes and actions he has and performs more than anyone else, but there are a great many other verses exclusive to him, revealed to explain his elevated status.

Therefore, the Holy Imam Ali had antithetical attributes, because he was courageous and stable and had firm decision in *jihād* for the sake of God, but was also merciful, compassionate, ascetic, and constantly in prayer; some of the greatest scholars have been fascinated by him.

The Mass of Antithetical Attributes the Master of the Believers Had

The compiler of *Nahj al-Balāghah* (*The Path of Eloquence*), the blessed Sayyid Raḍī, says in the introduction:

> One the wonders of Ali shared by no one else is that if one attentively and thoughtfully listens to his advice and sermons, one can gather his piety, remembrance of God, and avoidance of the world and any creatures in it. One can understand his greatness, the influence of his power, and his dominance of the whole nation, but there is no doubt that everything he says is the words of an ascetic. One gathers that he has no tendency but an ascetic one in anything, and does nothing but worship. For he always used to sit in the corner of his poorly built home, or shelter in the skirt of a

mountain, hearing nothing but his own voice and seeing nothing but himself. One can never believe that these speeches, advice, and sermons are delivered by one who has fought all his life, beheading many brave men and great commanders. He slew many courageous men, and his sword was always blood-stained—but at the same time he was more ascetic than the ascetics of the world.

These are some of his wonderful virtues and fair attributes acquired through adversity and made permanent traits. I have often spoken to my brothers in religion about this matter and they also marvel at it—it is wonderful to see such a statement by Sayyid Raḍī,[23] Ibn Abī al-Ḥadid, and Shāfi'ī: "The Master of the Faithful had antithetical characteristics."

What Sayyid Raḍī says is clearly very surprising, because what influences the common bold and brave men in the world is hard-heartedness, boldness, and rebellion, whereas what influences ascetic men is to ignore completely the passions and the charms of the world. However, the Imam attended to the people by lecturing them, reminding them of death, and warning them of the chastisement of the Hereafter—compassion, fairness and avoidance of the devil. These two different kinds of attributes are the antitheses possessed by the Master of the Faithful.

Secondly, that which influences the bold and blood-shedders is a person's insults, rebelliousness, uncultivated passions, and wildness. In contrast, that which influences the ascetic, the wise advisers, and those who forsake this world is one's ethics.

Ali was more courageous than anyone else; he was a fighter, but only ever for the sake of God; he was more ascetic than anyone else and shunned the delights of the world; his advice to the people was to care about death, be ethical, and learn from what had happened to their predecessors—his advice was more effective than anyone else's.

He prayed harder than anyone else and was more careful of his behavior than anyone else; that is why his character was better than anyone else's. He was always cheerful and bright and always wore a pleasant smile on his face.

He was never cross and never looked miserable; he would never depress others with moodiness. He was rather witty, so those close to him would find fault with him. They would say: "The Holy Imam is too witty to be caliph!" This is one of the remarkable and surprising things about him.

On the other hand, those who tried to seize authority, supremacy and leadership over the Household were selfish, haughty, and proud, and lacked decency—contrary to them, the Master of the Faithful was the epitome of nobility.

Without a doubt, friends and enemies alike believed that after the Prophet, his cousin was the noblest of God's creatures. Apart from these proportional attributes of his, he possessed numerous characteristics. However, he had more humility and courtesy than others towards the poor, weak, and abject, and was lenient towards them. He was the best-tempered, fairest, wisest about the truth, and farthest from being selfish.

Thus was the Holy Imam's character both before and during his leadership and caliphate. Being leader and chief did not affect his pleasing morality. In any case, how could the leadership change his attitude and morality, given he always was the spiritual leader of the nation, and how could the governorship affect him, given he was always the Amir over the people? He did not attain his nobility from the caliphate and did not become pompous with it; according to what Abū 'Abdullāh Ahmad ibn Ḥanbal says, he was the same by nature.

Shaykh Abū al-Faraj 'Abd al-Raḥmān ibn Ali ibn al-Jawzī says in his well-known history book *Muntaẓim*:

> In the presence of Ahmad ibn Ḥanbal, they spoke a lot concerning the caliphate of Abū Bakr and Ali. Finally Ahmad raised his voice saying: You have spoken too much; in short:
>
> انَّ عَلِيّاً لَمْ تَزِنْهُ الْخِلافَةُ وَلٰكِنَّهُ زانَها
>
> Ali was not adorned by the caliphate but the caliphate was adorned by Him.

He means that the others were adorned and their deficiencies were corrected by the caliphate, whereas Ali had no deficiency for the caliphate to correct. In fact, it was a defect in the caliphate that was corrected during Ali's governorship.

On the other hand, what persuades the courageous, slayers, and blood-shedders is mercilessness, and being less forgiving. It is because they are heartless and hot-tempered, and their anger towards the people is excessive.

However, Ali is quite different; he maintained his natural forgiveness, patience, and tolerance even in battle, when he was shedding blood and defeating his enemies.[24]

And how beautifully has Mahyār, the poet, said about the Holy Imam:

حَتّٰى إذا دارَتْ رَحى بَغْيِهِمْ عَلَيْهِمْ وَسَبَقَ السَّيْفُ الْعَذَلْ
عاذُوا بِعَفْوٍ ماجِدٍ مُعَوِّدٍ لِلْعَفْوِ حَمّالٍ لَهُمْ عَلَى الْعِلَلْ

فَنَجَتِ الْبَقْيا عَلَيْهِمْ مَنْ نَجا وَأَكَلَ الْحَدِيدُ مِنْهُمْ مَنْ أَكَل
أَطَّتْ بِهِمْ أَرْحامُهُمْ فَلَمْ يُطِعْ ثائِرَةُ الْغَيْظِ وَلَمْ تَشْفِ الْغَلَل

Until when the mill of their rebellion turned against them and the sword preceded rebuke, they took refuge in a noble, thoroughly forgiving man accustomed to forgiveness, accepting of their excuses. Showing mercy saved those who survived and iron ate of those it ate. The sympathy of kinship cried out to them but he did not comply with the tumult of anger or heal the rancor.

In any event, we have not yet seen a bold man be generous and forgiving. 'Abdullāh ibn Zubayr was bold but the meanest man among the people, and his father, Zubayr, was also mean and greedy.

'Umar once told him: "If you become the caliph in Baṭḥā', you will always give people slaps to collect their measures and the revenues." Because Ali wanted to stop his nephew 'Abdullāh ibn Ja'far's spending, he decided to make him a partner of Zubayr in his property and business, and after that, he kept saying:

Zubayr benefited from 'Abdullāh's spending, and in this way, he found a good shelter (he took the property undeniably for his benefit from him), and this partnership could not stop 'Abdullāh's spending and extravagance.

Ṭalḥah was brave, but very greedy and mean; he avoided giving anything away. He was so stingy that he left behind too much property to be counted.

'Abd al-Mālik was also brave, but so mean and greedy that he became the butt of jokes and maxims: "His perspiration is withheld, and his main generosity is his jealousy and meanness." However, everyone noticed how brave and generous Ali, the Master of the Faithful, was; how could they not, if it was the Holy Imam's extraordinary character![25]

The famous poet Shaykh Safi al-Dīn ibn 'Abdul Aziz says about the matter:

جُمِعَتْ فِي صِفاتِكَ الْأَضْدادُ فَلِهذا عَزَّتْ لَكَ الْأَنْدادُ
زاهِدٌ حاكِمٌ حَلِيمٌ شُجاعٌ فاتِكٌ ناسِكٌ قَهِيرٌ جَوادُ
شِيَمٌ ما جُمِعْنَ فِي بَشَرٍ قَطْ وَلا حازَ مِثْلَهُنَّ الْعِبادُ
خُلُقٌ يُخْجِلُ النَّسِيمَ مِنَ اللُّطْفِ وَبَأْسٌ يَذُوبُ مِنْهُ الْجَمادُ

ظَهَرَتْ مِنكَ فِي الْوَرى مَكْرُماتٌ فَاقَرَتْ بِفَضْلِكَ الْحُسّادُ
انْ يُكَذِّبْ بِها عَداكَ فَقَدْ كَذَّبَ مِنْ قَبْلُ قَوْمُ لُوطٍ وَعادُ
جَلَّ مَعْناكَ انْ يُحيطَ بِهِ الشِّعْرُ وَيُحْصى صِفاتِهِ النُّقّاد

You in whom contradictions amass, that is why your equals are rare. Ascetic, wise, clement, killing, devout, poor, generous—virtues never before combined in a human nor have the servants possessed the like of them.

The breeze blushes in shame by seeing the fairness of your nature, and ferocity from which rock melts away. Noble deeds have issued from you among the people such that the envious have conceded your bounty. If the enemy has rejected you, Lot and Ād and Lot's people also rejected.

Your meaning is too great to be confined in poetry or its attributes to be counted by critics.

After quoting this poem, Qazi Nūrullah says:

All the Master of the Faithful's attributes are based on his reflecting the High, in the amplitude of Perfection, and his full knowledge of things, which is just and does not discriminate; that is, he considers both sides of the matter. It is because the perfection of every attribute is clear for a fair investigator, as is seen in God's attributes: "And He is the First and the Last, and He is Manifest and Invisible." Therefore, the different aspects of God's attributes and the similarities to the perfect attributes are not hidden.

How beautifully the Persian Poet has composed these verses:

Ali, the Guardian, was not the captive of his soul for an instant, and because of his "not being captive" he became the Amir of the believers.

How much distance there is between the Amir of the soul and the Amir of the people, pride is for the humble Amir.

Ali never had enough food when he was eating, but he fed him who came to him with an empty stomach.

He was not oppressed and never subjugated by oppression; through his never being subjugated, everything looked subjugated by him.

Ali did not give away in vain whatever belonged to the Treasury of the Nation, for he was well aware of God's Awareness.

Blessed is the nation whose Leader is such a dignified man, and is so aware!

Lesson Seventeen:
The Unanimous Opinions of the Infallible about Management

LESSON SEVENTEEN

In the Name of God, the Merciful, the Compassionate
On the infallibility of the Prophets and the Imams, peace be upon them
And blessing upon Mohammad and his immaculate Household, and
may God's curse be on his enemies from now until the Day of
Resurrection! And there is no power or strength except through God,
the High, the Great.

The Wise God has stated in His Glorious Book:

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا أَطِيعُوا اللَّهَ وَأَطِيعُوا الرَّسُولَ وَأُولِي الْأَمْرِ مِنكُمْ فَإِن تَنَازَعْتُمْ فِي شَيْءٍ فَرُدُّوهُ إِلَى اللَّهِ وَالرَّسُولِ إِن كُنتُمْ تُؤْمِنُونَ بِاللَّهِ وَالْيَوْمِ الْآخِرِ ذَٰلِكَ خَيْرٌ وَأَحْسَنُ تَأْوِيلًا

O you who believe! Obey God, and obey the Messenger and those of you who are in authority; and if you have a dispute concerning any matter, refer it to God and the Messenger if you are (in truth) believers in God and the Last Day. That is better and more seemly in the end. (4:59)

Zamakhsharī says[26]: In this verse, *those in authority* or the scholars means the nation or 'the First Four Caliphs' in Islam, and,

وَمَنْ تَبِعَهُمْ عَلَى الْحَقِّ

Whoever follows you in truth,

and the commanders.

Suyūṭī agrees, and includes many *hadiths* in his exegesis, and many other Sunni exegetes follow his opinion. They rely on a dispute between 'Ammār and Khālid ibn Walīd as evidence in support of their opinion:

> The Holy Prophet sent Khālid ibn Walīd into a certain battle and 'Ammār was in the army. The army set off on the mission, but before approaching the enemy, they stopped and dismounted; as it was late at night, Khālid ibn Walīd decided to attack the tribe the following morning. That night, Dhū al-'Ubaynatayn informed the tribe of the arrival of Khālid ibn Walīd's army. Therefore, they all escaped in the darkness except for one man who had ordered his wife to pack the furniture, who had gone alone to Khālid ibn Walīd's and asked to see 'Ammār. Someone introduced 'Ammār to him, and so he said:
>
> Abū al-Yaqẓān, I have embraced Islam and testified that there is no deity save God and Mohammad is His Messenger and servant.

Upon hearing of your arrival here, all my relatives escaped and I am alone here, now. Will this Islam support me tomorrow morning or shall I escape as they did?

'Ammār answered him: "This belief of yours is enough." Then, the man felt safe and did not escape. When morning came, Khālid gave the command to attack and plunder the enemy. The army attacked but found no one but that man. Khālid himself captured the man and took away all his belongings. The news was reported to 'Ammār. He got up and went straight to Khālid, saying: "Release this man and leave him alone because he has embraced Islam, and I have granted him asylum."

Khālid said: "How are you going to grant him asylum?" It was then that 'Ammār and Khālid vilified one another. They eventually took their complaint to the Prophet. His Holiness agreed with 'Ammār and confirmed his grant of asylum. However, he also forbade 'Ammār from granting asylum when under the command of another. Those two again vilified each other in the Prophet's presence and Khālid asked: "O Messenger of God, do you allow this freeman to vilify me?" The Holy Prophet said: "Khālid, stop vilifying and cursing 'Ammār. In fact, whoever vilifies Ammār is vilified by God in return; whoever makes 'Ammār angry makes God angry; and whoever curses 'Ammār is cursed by God."

'Ammār then became angry with Khālid ibn Walīd's deviation, stood up, and left the place. Khālid ibn Walīd followed him, seized his clothes from behind, and asked him to forgive him. 'Ammār did so.

It was then that God revealed the above verse.[27]

They also narrate from Abū Hurayrah that the Prophet said:

قَالَ رَسُولُ اللهِ صلى الله عليه و آله وسلم: مَنْ اطاعَنى فَقَدْ أطاعَ اللهَ، وَمَنْ اَطاعَ أميرى فَقَدْ أطاعَنى، وَمَنْ عَصانى فَقَدْ عَصَى اللهَ، وَمَنْ عَصى أميرى فَقَدْ عَصانى

Whoever follows me, certainly follows God, and whoever follows my commander, really follows me; and whoever disobeys me, certainly disobeys God, and whoever disobeys my commander, really disobeys me.[28]

He also relates another story which says that *those in authority* means commanders—even oppressors and the unjust.

As already discussed, we believe that the true meaning of *those in authority* is the Infallible Imams; otherwise, it requires the convergence of command and prohibition on a single subject, which is contrary to logic and common sense. Fakhr Rāzī, in his exegesis, concedes the same.

But concerning the story of Khālid and 'Ammār, it is obvious that the Holy Prophet has not prohibited 'Ammār from granting anyone

asylum—this sentence is redundant in the story. Perhaps the narrator has deliberately added this sentence to link the verse of *those in authority* with the duty to obey the commanders. The Holy Prophet does not reject a grant of asylum by any Muslim, even a lowly one, let alone that of 'Ammār, an early convert to Islam, testifying to his faith.

قال رسول الله في خطبة خطبها في مسجد الخيف: بسم الله الرحمن الرحيم، نضّر الله عبداً سمع مقالتي فوعاها وحفظها وبلّغها من لم يسمعها فربّ حامل فقه غير فقيه وربّ حامل فقه إلى من هو أفقه منه ثلاث لا يغلّ عليهن قلب امرئ مسلم إخلاص العمل لله والنصيحة لأئمة المسلمين واللزوم لجماعتهم فإن دعوتهم محيطة من ورائهم المؤمنون إخوة تتكافأ دماؤهم وهم يد على من سواهم، يسعى بذمتهم أدناهم

In a sermon he delivered in the mosque at al-Khīf, the Prophet said:

> In the name of God, the Merciful, the Compassionate: May God make prosperous a slave who hears, retains, remembers, and passes on what I have said to someone who has not heard it. A bearer of knowledge may not be knowledgeable. A transmitter of understanding may not have understanding. A transmitter of understanding may [transmit it] to someone with more understanding than himself. A Muslim man's heart is not closed to three things: sincerity of work for God, support for the Muslims' leaders, and adherence to their congregation. Surely the believers surround their call from behind, a single brotherhood, their blood all the same, a single hand against everyone else, the lowliest of them able to pledge the protection of all of them.[29]

If one carefully examines the story of Khālid and 'Ammār, it becomes clear that, in that case, Khālid was guilty. If 'Ammār had been guilty, then why did the Prophet keep praising him, and Khālid ask him for his forgiveness?!

However, what is the relationship between the *hadith*: "He who obeys his Amir in fact obeys God" and the verse *...those...who are in authority*? It is right in its place, and *those...who are in authority* are also infallibles, obedience to whom is on a par with obedience to the Messenger of God—to whom obedience is incumbent.

Fakhr Rāzī is well aware that *those...in authority* are infallible; however, because he is reluctant to apply these words to the Infallible Imams, he naturally wanders and finally avoids it. He says:

> The verse means the duty to obey unconditionally *those...in authority*, but because no one is infallible, or it is difficult to find someone who is, the

> term *those...in authority* means the nation's great and learned people who are in charge; when they reach a consensus on a problem, the result is perfect, because infallibility is divinely bestowed.

Therefore, the common Four Principles of Jurisprudence can be deduced from this verse: *obey God* refers to the authoritativeness of the Book, *obey the Messenger* to the authoritativeness of the Prophet, and *those in authority* to the authoritativeness of consensus; *If you have a dispute in something, refer to God and His Messenger* refers to the authoritativeness of analogy. The reason for the referral of the matter is misunderstanding of the Book, laws, and narrations, and it is the assembly whose obedience is incumbent. In this case, the meaning of referring the Book of God, laws, and Messenger's *hadiths* is the same as deducing the ruling for that problem from an analogous one—so this is analogy. Because he relies on the verse as evidence of the authoritativeness of these four particular principles only, if discretion, espoused by Abū Ḥanīfa, and jurist's infallibility, espoused by Mālik, mean the same as analogy, they are valid; but if they are not the same as analogy, then this very verse is proof of their invalidity.

The reason for his detailed discussion of this subject is:

> If someone says that *those in authority* means the consensus of those involved in politics, this contradicts the exegetes' compound consensus that *those in authority* can only mean one of four things: firstly: the First Four Caliphs in Islam; secondly: the commanders; thirdly: the scholars; and, fourthly: whatever is related by the Infallible Imams. Our answer is: "Those involved in politics" means the learned among the people who are aware of society's problems, corruption, or moral soundness, and their unity and their agreement upon their decisions prove the correctness of what they say; according to the Prophet: "My nation will not reach a consensus in error." Therefore, there is no objection to the third category, but it is the same as taking the nation's opinions and deciding which is correct and most perfect.

But, with a little more consideration, it becomes clear that his argument appears sophisticated, but is poorly concluded.

First we say: let us suppose that no one involved in politics is infallible, and each of them is prone to error. How can the result of a vote be protected from error or infallible? Clearly, if any one of them is prone to error, then the result of the vote is prone to error. But of course it is absolutely certain that a group is more likely to be correct than to err, though this likeliness [of being correct] and unlikeliness [of their all erring] does not transform a possibility of error into infallibility. In this

case, there are three possible ways in which the consensus could be infallible. Firstly, if all those involved in politics are infallible, their consensus will be infallible. However, it is obvious that since the death of the Prophet, those involved in politics have never all been infallible. Fakhr Rāzī himself concedes that it is impossible for God to let His obedience be suspended, so there must always be those who are in authority.

Secondly, if it is possible for those involved in politics to be individually fallible, it is wrong to think that collectively they can be infallible. It is because infallibility is a real and true attribute, but a collective's infallibility is a mental construct; it is impossible to believe that a reality can subsist in a mental construct. True attributes in the external are in need of real subjects. However, mental constructs are pursuant to the opinion of their constructors—how often there is misunderstanding between the true attributes and the mentally constructed attributes of a mental construct. The attributes of the collective are mentally constructed, but it is the individuals who are real and the essence of the construct.

The third possibility is to say that neither the collective nor the individual members of the collective have the attribute of infallibility. It is God alone who wants both the collective and its individual members to be free from errors—as per *mutawātir hadiths*. The possibility of error is seen in every *hadith*, but in *hadiths* transmitted via so many channels as to be incontrovertible (*mutawātir*) the possibility disappears.

In other words, an individual news report is liable to be wrong, but through being heard from multiple sources it gradually proves to be true, leaving no doubt; the same applies to the members of the collective. The opinion of each member of the collective may be wrong, but the more of them there are and the more who agree on the same suggestion, the less the possibility of error. It is on this basis that the Prophet said: *My nation does not reach a consensus in error.*

This consideration is also out of place, because first of all, this *hadith* says that the entire nation will not be in error, not that those involved in politics do not make mistakes! Besides, which verse, *hadith* or book says that "nation" means those involved in politics?

Secondly, this *hadith* negates the possibility of the nation's ever reaching a consensus in error, not the possibility of anyone in the nation's ever being in error. There is a big difference between the two. The first one means that the nation in its entirety will not agree to an error, which is exactly what the Shi'a believe—that the world is never void of an Infallible Imam; the Earth is never void of a Proof. Therefore, if the entire nation reaches a consensus on a matter, an Infallible must

be among them, and the final decision on the matter will be of that of the Infallible—and he is the Proof.

However, it is not correct that the second answer means that there is no error in their nation, because according to the partial affirmation, there is a possibility of error in their nation. However, because there is an Infallible among them, there is someone in their nation to say what is correct. Therefore, the meaning of the *hadith* conforms with the verses and *hadiths* that say that the Earth is never void of the right religion or an Infallible. As God, the most High, says:

فَإِنْ يَكْفُرْ بِهَا هَؤُلَاءِ فَقَدْ وَكَّلْنَا بِهَا قَوْمًا لَيْسُوا بِهَا بِكَافِرِينَ

...so if they disbelieve in it, then We will surely entrust it to a people who do not disbelieve in it. (6:89)

وَجَعَلَهَا كَلِمَةً بَاقِيَةً فِي عَقِبِهِ لَعَلَّهُمْ يَرْجِعُونَ

...and thus, he left that as an enduring word among his progeny so that they might return. (43:28)

إِنَّا نَحْنُ نَزَّلْنَا الذِّكْرَ وَإِنَّا لَهُ لَحَافِظُونَ

...surely We have sent down the Reminder, and surely We are its Protector. (15:9)

وَإِنَّهُ لَكِتَابٌ عَزِيزٌ لَا يَأْتِيهِ الْبَاطِلُ مِنْ بَيْنِ يَدَيْهِ وَلَا مِنْ خَلْفِهِ

...and most surely it is a Mighty Book. Falsehood cannot come at it from before it or from behind it. (41:41–42)

Of course, this is not exclusive to the nation of the Master of Messengers. Both sects narrate indubitable *hadiths* that say that the Jewish people divided into seventy-one sects, all of whom except one are doomed. Jesus' people divided into seventy-two sects, all of whom except one are doomed. Mohammad's people will divide into seventy-three sects, all of whom are doomed except one. In short, even though the authenticity of this *hadith—My nation does not reach a consensus in error*—is difficult to believe, it may still be the words of an Infallible if it means because of *those...in authority*—in which case we should say the reason for it is their infallibility.

Through careful consideration we see the first explanation—that it is God's will that people involved in politics be free of error, even if the opinion of every individual is open to error—is obviously not the final word, because people involved in politics are not the Muslims' keepers.

There have always been such people in towns, villages, and cities. Time and again it has been seen that when sharing their opinions, they make mistakes and fall into pitfalls—history and experience are testimony to this. So how can one rely on their infallibility and ignore God's will and want?

Secondly, we might say: God's will and want for the Muslims, as the blessed nation, is for the opinions of those involved in politics to be immune to error. This is not correct either, because if there were such a privilege for the Muslims as opposed to all other nations, it would be inconsistent with God's Mercifulness. God has always established an Infallible among the people involved in politics to protect them from making mistakes—and to act in their daily life in accordance with the Qur'an, which is a scientific life for them. If it were so, then the Prophet would certainly have announced it at the stage of the miracles, and he would have specified its quality and parameters. He would have made it clear how the people involved in politics should handle it, and what kind of men should be involved, and how often or in what way they should meet. Should one set of politicians have been enough for a whole nation, or should each district have had its own politicians? If so, the Qur'an would certainly direct the people how to proceed, and the Prophet would have instructed his followers, letting them know its particulars. It would be written in books and recorded by historians; even the Prophet's Companions would have asked him how it should be. What was wrong with them that they should ask about the minutiae of the tangible, intangible, life, and death, but omit only this important matter? Concerning this, the Holy Qur'an says:

يَسْئَلُونَكَ عَنِ الْأَهِلَّةِ

...they ask you about the new moons. (2:189)

وَيَسْئَلُونَكَ عَنِ الْأَنفَالِ

...they ask you about the spoils of war. (8:1)

وَيَسْئَلُونَكَ مَاذَا يُنفِقُونَ

...they ask you what they should spend. (2:215)

وَيَسْئَلُونَكَ عَنِ الْمَحِيضِ

...and they ask you about menstruation. (2:222)

وَيَسْئَلُونَكَ عَنِ الْجِبَالِ

...and they ask you about the mountains. (20:105)

وَيَسْئَلُونَكَ عَنْ ذِي الْقَرْنَيْنِ

...and they ask you about Dhū al-Qarnayn. (18:83)

However, apart from these kinds of questions, they did not ask about a matter vital to the Muslims. Surely it cannot be said that they did not ask a single question about political assemblies. However, like many other things Sunni opinion had an influence on, they have been deleted. That is why the questions have just not reached us, particularly because this council was not contrary to the nation's majority opinion, which followed this line, and nothing in its conditions was contrary to their views. In fact those involved in politics were those called for by such an assembly.

In the sedition and incidents following the Prophet's death, those meeting under Saqīfah of Banū Sā'idah, including those who usurped the caliphate, should in their dispute have referred to this consensus, and based their claims on this strange miracle, but they did not do so. In fact neither the Companions nor the successors have said a single word about it in any *hadiths* or history books!

It was only six centuries after the event that Fakhr Rāzī came upon this extraordinary miracle, and knew better than those who were actually present at what happened at Abū Bakr, 'Umar, and Abū 'Ubayda's assembly under the Saqīfah—in itself more miraculous than the collective infallibility of the fallible.

Moreover, he himself concedes that exegetes and narrators throughout the Islamic world believe that *those...in authority* can only mean one of four things—the Rightly Guided Caliphs, the commanders, the scholars, or the Infallible Imams. A council of people involved in politics, which is contrary to the compound consensus, should be made one of the four, through correcting the scholars' opinions, thus avoiding a breach of consensus.

This is in spite of the fact that in *al-Durr al-Manthūr* (vol. 2, pp. 176–177) Suyūṭī cites some exegetes' *hadiths*, none of which have about them the whiff of an assembly of people involved in politics. [Fakhr Rāzī] says that anything those in authority say has to be obeyed according to the above verse. That is why by conceding that one of those four interpretations alone is correct, Fakhr Rāzī has refuted his own argument that it means those involved in politics and wasted his efforts in interpreting the verse.

Third, the infallibility of people involved in politics cannot be considered to be a miracle, but rather the natural result of following the instruction of the Qur'an and the Prophet, because the teachings and instructions of the Qur'an and the Prophet are based on what is true and correct. Therefore the decisions and opinions of those who think according to and are trained by this school are almost always perfect and free from error.

This explanation is also wrong.

First of all, it is wrong because people share the same perceptionary limitations and fallibility, so how can the decisions and opinions of any given group be perfect and infallible? Right from the beginning of Islam, which assembly or people involved in politics has been infallible—has not erred? Fighting and disputes have been ongoing among the Muslims since the death of the Prophet; how did this corruption come about, and what is its origin? Many assemblies and people involved in politics, wherever they are established, are similar to Saqīfah of Banū Sā'idah, making changes and getting results based on their own reasoning. Not only do they not take a single step for the benefit of the people, but they also plant the seed of desperation and cruelty in the hearts of the dispossessed!

The Rulers' Crimes All Came About Because of People Involved in Politics

That pure prophecy and basis of Qur'anic instructions grounded in spiritual life, unity, peace, purity, generosity, mercifulness, assisting the poor, and guiding the people to the straight path quickly changed into a huge tyrannical empire ruled by the Umayyad caliph in Damascus. It was turned into hatred with so much oppression of helpless poor people that Islam gave way to dictatorship, and God's laws were completely changed, or rather outlawed; the commands of the Qur'an disappeared; people's belongings were plundered; there was bloodshed everywhere; and Islam's holiness was defiled. There were a great many crimes committed throughout the Umayyad and Abbāsid eras as well as those that followed; it was so disastrous that it should be called cruel Satan's governorship instead of Divine Governorship. All these events were because of that first assembly. It was they who brought such a miserable situation to the pure, innocent people.

The Umayyad governorship was endorsed by 'Umar; it was 'Umar who appointed Mu'āwiyah governor of the Levant, setting him up as overseer of the people and their properties. 'Umar permitted him, signed a luxurious empire over to him, and appointed him in that position. Mu'āwiyah's, Yazīd's, Marwan's, and 'Abd al-Mālik's

governorships were all with 'Umar's permission and by his command. 'Umar took the caliphate to the council and appointed a panel of six. Then, with 'Abd al-Raḥmān ibn 'Awf's vote, 'Uthmān dominated the Muslims and their belongings and properties. He gave his relatives public property, appointed Mu'āwiyah governor of the Levant, and wrote to his governor in Egypt to kill Muhammad ibn Abī Bakr. In the end, after so much corruption and so many crimes, he was killed by the Egyptians in an uprising.

By Abū Bakr's personal choice, 'Umar, who considered himself to be the sole expert among those involved in politics, was appointed as caliph. It was 'Umar who set fire to the front door of the holy righteous one, Fāṭimah, wife of Ali al-Murtaḍā, daughter of the Prophet. Then, at sword's point, he took the rightful successor to the mosque, ordering him to swear allegiance in the presence of the gathering in the mosque, denying all his virtues, and his being executor, caliph, vizier, governor, and even brother.[30] All these disasters are the result of the day of Saqīfah, which was wrong from the outset, diverted Islam from its straight path, and altered the course of history.

Abū Bakr seized Fadak from Holy Zahrā' and had Mālik ibn Nuwayrah killed by Khālid ibn Walīd. Abū Bakr allowed Khālid to punish and lash fornicators and plunder Muslim property as he saw fit, thus exonerating him.[31] Since then, this kind of exoneration has been exercised by tyrannical rulers and commanders.

It is strange that some ignorant people have written in their books that 'Umar and Abū Bakr's governorships were the simplest, and were Divine Governorships! This kind of simple governorship, which rises up against true Islam and the true governorship and changes Muslims' lives, ought to be feared when considered alongside 'Uthmān's and Mu'āwiyah's governorships, which betrayed what they truly were. Because of their audacity and shamelessness, they let the world know of their crimes and deviation; however, 'Umar and Abū Bakr, who pretended to be supporters of Islam and bringers of unity to the people, carried out true acts of tyranny and were the real founders of misery and oppression. By his constant weeping and crying, Abū Bakr took Fadak away from Holy Zahrā'. He presented himself as a man of prudence, a real peace-maker and an impartial. On the day when he went to the mosque and delivered a sermon introducing himself as caliph, he made it clear that he was not going to draw a stipend from the public treasury, and did not do so until 'Umar encouraged him to.[32]

One must fear these kinds of tricks even more than the coercion of 'Uthmān and Mu'āwiyah.

In any case, all this long-term corruption was the result of that infallible vote that, according to Fakhr Rāzī, grew out of the Saqīfah; so, welcome this Saqīfah, and welcome this infallibility!

فمرحباً بهذه السقيفه ومرحباً بهذه العصمة!

If allegiance was the result of the infallible votes, then why did Abū Bakr keep saying: I have no need for your allegiance. Dismiss me?[33]

لا حاجة لي في بيعتكم اقيلوني

The Master of the Faithful is a reliable witness to this, as he states in the Shiqshiqiyyah sermon:

فيا عجبا بينا هو يستقيلها في حياته اذ عقدها لآخر بعد وفاته

How astonishing it was for us when he who used to say: 'Dismiss me from it,' within his lifetime appointed someone else to it after his death.[34]

It is well understood from the Holy Imam's statement that it was Abū Bakr who said: "Leave me alone, to resign, and choose Ali in my place." It would not be surprising if it truly was his resignation and the appointment of Ali. Further proof is his words: "Leave me alone. I am not the best among you while Ali is among you." This is how it is interpreted by Qūshchi, a Sunni, who finds no fault with the phrase "while Ali is among you," and concedes that this saying is attributable to Abū Bakr.

In *Iḥqāq al-Ḥaqq* it is narrated by Shūshtarī that Faḍl ibn Rūzbihān said in his reply pertaining to Abū Bakr's misdeeds and the setting alight of Holy Zahrā''s house:

> The six authentic Sunni *hadith* collections say that afterwards, Abū Bakr ascended the pulpit and said:
>
> أقيلوني فلست بخيركم وعلي فيكم
>
> Dismiss me, for I am not the best of you while Ali is among you.[35]

In *al-Ṣawā'iq al-Muḥriqah* Ibn Ḥajar also concedes that these were Abū Bakr's words.

Further, if the vote taken at the Saqīfah was infallible, then why did 'Umar consider it to be a blunder?![36]

Ṭabarī quotes 'Umar as saying:

ثُمَّ أنَّهُ بَلَغَنِي أنَّ قائلاً منكُم يَقول: لَو قَدماتَ امير المومنين (عمر) بايَعت فُلاناً فلا يَغُرَنَّ امرءاً أن يقول: انَّ بيعةَ أبي بكر كانَت فلتة فقد كانَت كذالكَ غيرَ أنَّ الله وَقى شرَّها

Next, it has reached me that one of you says: "If the Master of the Faithful ['Umar] dies, I will pledge allegiance to So-and-So," for a man would surely not be deluded in saying that the pledge of allegiance to Abū Bakr was a blunder, because it was so, except that God prevented its evil.[37]

And Ibn Hishām says:

ثمّ إنّه قد بلغني أنّ انّ فلاناً قال: والله لو قد مات عمر بن الخطاب لقد بايعت فلانا فلا يغرنّ أمرءاً أن يقول: إنّ بيعة أبي بكر كانت فلتةً فتمّت، وأنّها قد كانت كذالك إلّا آنّ الله وقي شرّها

Then it reached me that one of you said: 'By God, if 'Umar ibn al-Khaṭṭāb dies I will pledge allegiance to So-and-So and a man would not be deluded in saying: "The pledge to Abū Bakr was a blunder, and was completed."'[38] It was, except that God prevented its evil!

It is narrated in *Ansāb al-Ashrāf* vol. 1, 581 that 'Umar referred to the matter, explicitly naming names:

أنّ عمر قال: بلغني أنّ زبير قال: لو قد مات عمر بايعنا عليّاً...

'Indeed,' 'Umar said, 'It has reached me that Zubayr said: "If 'Umar dies, we will pledge allegiance to Ali..."'

And on pages 583–584 he says:

انّ فلاناً و فلاناً قالا: لو قد مات عمر بليعنا عليّاً... فمن بايع رجلاً غيرة فأنّهما اهل آن يقتلا، وإنّي اقسم بالله ليكفّنّ الرّجال او ليقطعنّ أيديهم وأرجلهم وليصلّبنّ في جزوع النّخل-

So-and-So and So-and-So said: "If 'Umar dies we will pledge allegiance to Ali..." Whoever pledges allegiance to a man out of zeal deserves to be killed. And I swear by God, the men should desist or their hands and feet will surely be chopped off and they will be crucified on palm trunks...[39]

Al-Sirah al-Ḥalabiyyah, vol. 3, p. 40 says:

Our Master, 'Umar, said:

أنّ بيعة ابي بكر فلتة ايّ من غير استعداد ولا مشورة كما تقدّم رداً على من بلغه عنه أنّه قال: إذا مات عمر بايعت فلاناً، والله ما كانت بيعة أبي بكر بمشورة، البيعته لا تتوقّف على ذالك. فغضب، فلمّا رجع من آخر حجّة حجّها المدينة قال على المنبر: قد بلغني أنّ فلاناً قال: والله لو مات عمر ذن الخطّاب لقد بايعت فلاناً، إن بيعة أبي بكر كانت فلتةً من غير مشورة، فلا يغترّنّ امرؤ أن يقول: إنّ بيعة أبي بكر كانت فلتةً، فنعم كانت كذالك إلّا أنّ الله قد وقى شرّها.

"Verily the pledge of allegiance to Abū Bakr was a blunder," i.e. without preparation or consultation as stated above in response to those who he had been informed had said: "When 'Umar dies I will pledge allegiance to So-and-So." "By God the allegiance to Abū Bakr was not through consultation. The pledge does not depend on that." He then became angry and so when he returned to Medina after the last pilgrimage he made, he said from the pulpit,

> It has reached me that So-and-So said: "By God, if 'Umar ibn al-Khaṭṭāb dies, I will pledge allegiance to So-and-So." Verily the pledge of allegiance to Abū Bakr was a blunder without consultation. A man would not be deluded if he said: "Surely the pledge of allegiance to Abū Bakr was a blunder." Yes, it was, except that God prevented its evil.

If the sum of the opinions of the people involved in politics is infallibility, Abū Bakr did not form a council and instead appointed 'Umar as the caliph on the basis of his own opinion without consultation, even though Abū Bakr was not infallible; so how can the mere election of 'Umar undertake granting Abū Bakr the attribute of infallibility, even though Ṭalḥah had challenged Abū Bakr, considering him to be wrong in that selection? Ṭalḥah was definitely involved in politics. How does Abū Bakr's opinion differ from Ṭalḥah's, even to the point of turning into infallibility while Ṭalḥah's does not?

إنّ أبابكر لمّا نصّ على عُمَرَ، قَامَ إليهِ طَلْحَةُ فَقَالَ لَهُ: مَا تَقُولُ لِرَبِّكَ وَقَدْ وَلَّيْتَ عَلَيْنَا فَظّاً غَلِيظاً؟ قَالَ أَبُوبَكْرٍ: فَرَكْتَ لِي عَيْنَيْكَ وَدَلَكْتَ لِي عَقِبَيْكَ وَجِئْتَنِي تَكُفُّنِي عَنْ رَأْيِي وَتَصُدُّنِي عَنْ دِينِي؟ أَقُولُ لَهُ إِذَا سَأَلَنِي: خَلَّفْتُ عَلَيْهِم خَيْرَ أَهْلِكَ.

Indeed, when Abū Bakr appointed 'Umar, Ṭalḥah said to him: What will you say to your Lord, having put someone stern and fierce in charge of us? Abū Bakr said: You have rubbed your eyes for me, dragged your heels with me, and come to me to dissuade me from my

opinion and swerve me from my religion! I will tell Him when He asks me: "I have left the best of Your people in charge of them."[40]

And if the opinions of those involved in politics are collectively infallible, why did all the Muslims criticize 'Abd al-Raḥmān ibn 'Awf, who pledged allegiance to 'Uthmān, and chose him as caliph? He himself keep criticizing 'Uthmān after his nature was revealed, and his crimes were exposed, until 'Uthmān exiled him from Medina.[41]

In brief, whatever corruption beset the Islamic world was because of the selfishness of some people whose crimes and mistakes Fakhr Rāzī later tried to cover up. Using forged narrations along with his opinionated exegesis, he tried to redress them for the Muslims.

Mālik ibn Nuwayrah's Objection to Abū Bakr's Caliphate

In the case of Nuwayrah's assassination, Abū Bakr clearly supported Khālid ibn Walīd; not only did he refrain from retaliating in like measure, or punishing him for his adultery with Mālik's wife, but he also called him "God's Sword" by saying:

لا اشيم سيفاً سلّه الله على الكافرين.

I will not sheathe a sword God has drawn on the unbelievers.

Mālik ibn Nuwayrah sacrificed himself for the sake of the governorship. His love for and following of the Master of the Faithful are what led to his being killed and Khālid's being pardoned.

Mālik ibn Nuwayrah al-Tamīmī al-Yarbū'ī was one of the great braves, horsemen, and poets and had an elevated position both in the days of ignorance and in Islam.

Blessed Qāḍi Nūr Allah Shūshtarī[42] in *Majālis al-Mu'minīn* (p. 114) and Muḥaddith Qummī in *Safinat al-Biḥār*[43] narrate on the authority of *al-Faḍā'il* by the great and the most dignified Shaykh, Shādhān ibn Jibra'īl Qummī, from whom Muḥaqqiq Ḥillī's teacher Sayyid Fakhkhār ibn Ma'd Mūsāwi narrates: al-Barā' ibn 'Āzib said:

> When we were sitting in the presence of the Prophet, and there were some companions with us, the Chiefs of the Banī Tamīm, including Mālik ibn Nuwayrah, entered. Mālik said:
>
> يارسول الله علّمني الايمان،
>
> O Messenger, please teach me the faith.

فقال له رسول الله: ان تشهد ان لا اله الّا الله، وانّي رسول الله، وتصلّي خمس، وتصوم شهر رمضان، و تؤدّي الزكاة، وتحجّ البيت، وتوالي وصيّ هذا. واشاره الى علي بن ابيطالب. ولا تسفك دماً ولا تسرق ولا تخون ولا تأكل مال اليتيم ولا تشرب الخمر وتؤمن بشرايعي وتحلّل حلالي وتحرّم حرامي وتعطي الحقّ من نفسك الضعيف والقويّ والكبير والصغير، وعدّ عليه شرايع الاسلام.

So the Prophet replied:

> Your testifying that there is no god except God, that I am God's Messenger, your praying five times, fasting in the month of Ramaḍān, giving *zakat*, performing the Pilgrimage to the House, and loving this executor of mine [he pointed to Ali ibn Abī Ṭālib], your not shedding blood, stealing, betraying, consuming orphans' property or drinking intoxicants; your believing in my commands and laws, considering lawful whatever I consider lawful and considering unlawful whatever I consider unlawful, and, returning the dues of the weak, strong, great or small to them.

Thereafter Mālik was very pleased and strutted away, saying:

تعلّمت وربّ الكعبه

By the Lord of the Ka'bah, I have learned the faith.

When he disappeared from the Prophet's sight, he said:

من اراد ان ينظر الي رجلٍ من اهل الجنة فلينظر الي هذا الرجل

Whoever wants to look at a man out of the people of Heaven should look at this man.

Abū Bakr and 'Umar asked God's Messenger for permission. They followed him and gave him the good news of what the Prophet had said about him. They asked him to seek forgiveness for them because he was one of the people of Heaven.

Mālik answered: "May God not forgive you. You abandon God's Messenger even though he can intercede and come after me to seek forgiveness for you." They were ashamed of their situation and came back. When they saw the Prophet he said:

في الحقّ مبغضةٌ

The truth can cause anger![44]

When God's Messenger passed away, Mālik went to Medina and looked for his executor. That was on Friday. When Abū Bakr ascended the pulpit to deliver a sermon to the Muslims, Mālik could not bear it. He asked Abū Bakr: "Are you not Taym's brother?"

He replied: "Yes." Mālik then asked: "Where is God's Messenger's executor, whom the Prophet enjoined me to follow?" The people [in the mosque] turned to him saying: "O Bedouin, how often one decree follows another!"

Mālik answered: "By God, nothing has changed. However, you have betrayed the implementation of God's Messenger's appointment of executor." He then turned to Abū Bakr and asked him: "Who has put you on this pulpit even though God's Messenger's executor is sitting [here]?" Abū Bakr said to those present: "Take out this Bedouin who urinates on his heels." Qunfudh and Khālid ibn Walīd beat him and took him out of the mosque. Mālik mounted his camel, invoked blessing upon God's Messenger, and recited this elegy:

اطعنا رسولَ اللهِ ما كان بيننا فيا قومِ ما شأني وشأنُ ابي بكرِ

إذا مات بكرٌ قام بكرٌ مقام فيلك وبيتِ الله قاصمة الظهرِ

We Obeyed God's Messenger when he was among us,
People, what business do I have with Abū Bakr?
When one new-born camel (*bakr*) dies another takes it place,
That, by God's House, is a backbreaker!'

Khālid ibn Walīd's Killing of Mālik ibn Nuwayrah and Committing of Adultery with his Wife

Yes, when God's Messenger delegated to Mālik the collection of supererogatory and obligatory alms from his people, and Mālik went to Medina after the Noble Messenger's passing and saw that the succession was different from what God's Messenger had designated and testamentarily instructed, he returned to his people and refrained from sending charity monies to Abū Bakr. He divided them among his people, then recited:

فقلت خذوا اموالكم غير خائفٍ ولا ناظرٍ فيما يجيء من الغدِ

فان قام بالدين المحوقِ قائمٌ اطعنا وقلنا الدين دين محمدِ

So I said:

Take your money without fear, none of you looking what will come tomorrow;
Expect not a harm may befall you one day!
If someone establishes the embracing religion,
We'll obey and say, "The religion is Muhammad's religion."[45]

Abū Bakr appointed Khālid ibn Walīd to go to Būṭāḥ[46] with an army, instructing him if they did not encounter anyone, to call to prayer and establish prayer. If the others called to prayer and established prayer, they were not to fight them, instead just asking them for *zakat*. If they refused, they were to plunder their belongings, nothing more. They had no right to kill anyone. If they refused to call to prayer and pray they should kill them by burning or however else.[47]

Abū Qutādah, whose name was Ḥārith, and 'Abdullāh ibn 'Umar were in Khālid ibn Walīd's army.[48] When Khālid's army reached Būṭāḥ, they found no armed forces there, and therefore, under the [cover of] night they raided the Bani Yarbū', Mālik's people, watched them, and began monitoring them; Mālik and his relatives then took up their arms. Khālid and those with him asked them: "Why have you taken up your arms?"

They said: "You, why have you taken up your arms?"

They replied: "Surely we are Muslims and we never attack."

They answered: "We are also Muslims."

[Khālid and his men] said: "If you are as you say, then put your weapons down; we will pray, and you pray." They put their arms down and began praying.[49] Khālid then ordered their capture and killing. Mālik ibn Nuwayrah asked: "Why are you killing us? We follow Islam."

Abū Qutādah and 'Abdullāh ibn 'Umar then said: "Khālid, stay your hand from killing Mālik, for he is a Muslim. We saw him pray."[50]

Khālid replied: "No, he must be killed."

The discussion became heated between Abū Qutādah and Khālid. Abū Qutādah promised God that he would not witness another war with Khālid ibn Walīd.[51]

Mālik said: "O Khālid, send me to Abū Bakr for him to be the one to pass judgment between us." Khālid said: "I will never give you any respite."[52]

In the meantime, Khālid caught sight of Mālik's wife, Umm Tamīm. She was extremely pretty and beautiful. Khālid's heart was set on her; he propositioned her and resolved to commit adultery. He then made killing Mālik a precursor to achieving his purpose.

Mālik then said to his wife in Khālid's presence: "You are who has killed me. Now I have to be killed to defend my reputation and honor!"[53]

Ultimately what Mālik said did not persuade Khālid. Mālik then said: "Khālid, you have come for another matter but our crime is a lot smaller than it."[54]

Khālid ordered Ḍirār ibn Azwar to behead Mālik, so he killed him [with Mālik's] showing forbearance.[55]

That same night, Khālid committed adultery with Mālik's wife, Umm Tamīm.[56] He then ordered the heads of the slain dead be used to support their cooking pots. They then lit the fire. Mālik had a large head and a lot of hair. Before his head was well done, the pots cooked through.[57]

Khālid then ordered that the women be taken as prisoners to Medina and all their belongings be plundered.

This incident was too much for the Muslims to bear, so 'Umar went to Abū Bakr and said: "Khālid has killed the Muslims, killed Mālik ibn Nuwayrah, committed adultery with his Muslim wife, and plundered Muslims' belongings. I therefore think you should retaliate in like measure against him and carry out the punishment for adultery against him."

Later on, when Khālid entered the mosque in Medina, wearing a robe with bits of iron pieces stuck everywhere on it, and a turban into which arrows had stuck wrapped round [his head], 'Umar stood up to him and pulled the arrows out of his head, snapped them, and said: "You have killed a Muslim man, then committed adultery with his wife. By God, I am going to stone you."

Khālid did not say anything, thinking that Abū Bakr's view was the same as 'Umar's until he went to see Abū Bakr and told him the tale. Some of what he told him was: "Surely I killed Mālik because he said such-and-such and such-and-such about you."

مالك قال لخالد وهو يراجعه: ما اخالُ صاحبكم الا وقد كان يقول كذا وكذا

Mālik had said in response to Khālid: "I only left your Master because he said such-and-such and such-and-such. Khālid had said in reply to him:

اوما تعدّ لك صاحباً؟

"Do you not consider him to be your Master? That is why I gave the order for his head to be cut off."

Abū Bakr's Defense of Khālid's Crimes

Abū Bakr pardoned Khālid and Khālid left Abū Bakr cheerfully.[58] 'Umar then came to Abū Bakr and said: "Khālid has committed adultery, so administer the punishment to him." Abū Bakr said:

لا، لإنه تأول فاخطأ

"No, because he made an interpretation but made a mistake." 'Umar then said: "He has killed a Muslim, so kill him." Abū Bakr then answered:

لا، انه تأول فاخطأ

"No. Surely he made an interpretation but made a mistake." Then, he said: "'Umar, I would not sheath a sword drawn by God on them."[59]

ماكُنتُ لِاغمِدَ سَيفاً سَلَّهُ اللهُ عَلَيهِم

'Umar then said: "Abū Bakr, dismiss him from his position."

Abū Bakr then replied to him: "I will not sheathe a sword brandished by God against the unbelievers."[60]

لا اغمِد سيفاً شهره الله على الكفار.

Mālik's brother, Mutammim ibn Nuwayrah, went to Medina seeking his brother's bloodwite from Abū Bakr and wanting [to take] the prisoners from him. So Abū Bakr ordered the return of the prisoners. 'Umar beseeched Abū Bakr to dismiss Khālid, telling him:

انّ فی سیفِهِ رهقاً.

Surely, there is wrongdoing in his sword.[61]

So Abū Bakr replied: "No, 'Umar, I would not sheathe a sword drawn by God on the unbelievers."[62]

لا، یاعمر، لم اکن لِاشیم سیفاً سلّه الله علی الکافِرین.

'Abdullāh ibn 'Umar and Qutādah came to Abū Bakr and testified that Khālid had killed a Muslim. They told him: "Mālik ibn Nuwayrah

followed Islam—we saw his call to prayer and his *iqāmah*." Abū Bakr then turned away from Qutādah and became angry with him![63]

Yes, Khālid killed Mālik on the pretext that he had apostatized from Islam. Every time that believing man said: "I am a Muslim," Khālid replied:"You have to be killed." When he told him: "This is she who killed me," Khālid said:

بل رجوعک عن الإسلام

Rather, it is your abandonment of Islam.[64]

Even though Mālik ibn Nuwayrah, the pure living Companion, did not apostatize from Islam and only said something about Abū Bakr, related by Khālid to Abū Bakr, it was these words that caused that innocent man's blood to be spilled and Khālid to be executed for what he had done.

Abū Bakr pardoned Khālid and did not kill him or punish him for adultery or for making a false accusation. He did not discipline him for taking away Muslims' belongings.

Rather, we find the contrary. We find that he did not rebuke him for those atrocious deeds, instead defending him and calling that openly murderous, sinful wrongdoer "God's sword." So he called him God's Sword drawn to kill the unbelievers (such as Mālik ibn Nuwayrah. Muslim wives' honor was besmirched by [Khālid] and Muslims' property was pillaged).

If we suppose that Mālik refused to give *zakat*, was his sentence death? Mālik refused to pay *zakat* to Abū Bakr, but not to God's Messenger's executor. As per his poetry, Mālik was a Muslim, so, is it permissible to kill a Muslim?

If we suppose that Mālik apostatized from Islam by turning against Abū Bakr, was it permissible to commit adultery with Mālik's wife—a Muslim woman? Is this excusable? Is there not in the presence of 'Abdullāh ibn 'Umar and Qutādah—who had closely witnessed the event—incontrovertible proof removing any excuse? Why was Abū Bakr angry with what they said, and did he turn away from them?

[Is it] because Khālid supported him in his government?

Abū Bakr gave the order for Mālik's bloodwite to be paid from the public treasury and for the prisoners to be returned.

So should we consider those incidents proper deeds done by Abū Bakr and construe them as personal judgment (*ijtihād*) because it is an explanation based on his being infallible and one of those in authority? In fact, those such as Fakhr Rāzī who tried to provide an explanation for and excuse those flagrant misdeeds were accomplices to those crimes

committed by Abū Bakr and his minions. So was Khālid's sword really God's sword drawn by God on the people?!

'Umar says:

أنّ في سيفِهِ رهقا

There is wrongdoing in Khālid's sword,

so is this sacrilege and transgression God's doing, and Khālid God's sword? 'Umar says: "No," but Abū Bakr says: "He is God's Sword."

قُلْ تَعالَوا اتْلُ مَا حَرَّمَ رَبُّكُمْ عَلَيْكُمْ أَلَّا تُشْرِكُوا بِهِ شَيْئاً...
وَلَا تَقْرَبُوا الْفَوَاحِشَ مَا ظَهَرَ مِنْهَا وَمَا بَطَنَ وَلَا تَقْتُلُوا النَّفْسَ الَّتِي حَرَّمَ اللهُ إِلَّا بِالْحَقِّ ذَلِكُمْ وَصَّيْكُمْ بِهِ لَعَلَّكُمْ تَعْقِلُونَ...
وَأَنَّ هَذَا صِرَاطِي مُسْتَقِيماً فَاتَّبِعُوهُ وَلَا تَتَّبِعُوا السُّبُلَ فَتَفَرَّقَ بِكُمْ عَنْ سَبِيلِهِ ذَلِكُمْ وَصَّيْكُمْ بِهِ لَعَلَّكُمْ تَتَّقُونَ.

Say: Come, I will recite unto you that which your Lord hath made a sacred duty for you: That ye ascribe no thing as partner unto Him...and that ye draw not nigh to lewd things whether open or concealed. And that ye slay not the life which God hath made sacred, save in the course of justice. This He hath command you, in order that ye may discern...And (He commandeth you, saying): This is My straight path, so follow it. Follow not other ways, lest ye be parted from His way. This hath He ordained for you, that ye may be God-fearing. (6:151–153)

Lesson Eighteen:
The Imam is a "United-with-the Unity-Status-Human," and the Qur'an is a Guidance by the Imam

LESSON EIGHTEEN

In the Name of God, the Compassionate, the most Merciful
And blessing upon Mohammad and his pure Household, and God's curse on his enemies from now until the Day of Resurrection! There is no power or strength except through the Great, Lofty God.

The Wise God states in His Glorious Book:

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا أَطِيعُوا اللَّهَ وَأَطِيعُوا الرَّسُولَ وَأُولِي الْأَمْرِ مِنكُمْ فَإِن تَنَازَعْتُمْ فِي شَيْءٍ فَرُدُّوهُ إِلَى اللَّهِ وَالرَّسُولِ إِن كُنتُمْ تُؤْمِنُونَ بِاللَّهِ وَالْيَوْمِ الْآخِرِ ذَٰلِكَ خَيْرٌ وَأَحْسَنُ تَأْوِيلًا

O you who believe! Obey God, and obey the Messenger and those of you who are in authority; and if ye have a dispute concerning any matter, refer it to God and the Messenger if you are (in truth) believers in God and the Last Day. That is better and more seemly in the end. (4:59)

The Imam is a guide who leads man to perfection and the highest apex of Unity and the status of insight, and because man was created with truth, an Imam must also be a true guide to lead man to that state. Otherwise, someone who lacks this quality and has less than this Divinely-given knowledge is good for nothing.

The Whole of Creation and All Creatures Are Based on the Truth

مَا خَلَقْنَا السَّمَاوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضَ وَمَا بَيْنَهُمَا إِلَّا بِالْحَقِّ.

We created not the heavens and the Earth and all that is between them save with truth. (46:3)

وَ مَا خَلَقْنَا السَّمَاءَ وَالْأَرْضَ وَمَا بَيْنَهُمَا بَاطِلًا ذَٰلِكَ ظَنُّ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا...

...and We have not created Heaven and earth and whatever is between them in vain, that is the opinion of those who disbelieve... (38:27)

These verses prove that creation is not vain and meaningless; that is, everything has been created in the right way—there is no exception to this fact. All these creatures and the world of creation are based on fact and correct calculation; the tiniest entities to the largest ones, either living or dead, are within the boundaries of this fact. Man, who is one

of the creatures, has also been created the same. God created man with the truth with his nature inclining towards Unity; as He states:

فَأَقِمْ وَجْهَكَ لِلدِّينِ حَنِيفًا فِطْرَتَ اللَّهِ الَّتِي فَطَرَ النَّاسَ عَلَيْهَا لَا تَبْدِيلَ لِخَلْقِ اللَّهِ ذَٰلِكَ الدِّينُ الْقَيِّمُ وَلَٰكِنَّ أَكْثَرَ النَّاسِ لَا يَعْلَمُونَ.

...So set your face steadily towards the religion, God's handiwork in which He has created mankind. There is no altering God's creation. That is the correct religion, but most men do not know. (30:30)

Man has perception, understanding, instincts, and attributes, all of which spring from Unity. God created man on the basis of perception and understanding the truth, and He has made his heart the repository of His secrets.

"Unity" means considering God to be Unique in all aspects of being: nature, attributes, and manifestations in the world of existence. All beings are connected to His Essence. There is no rule in Heaven or Earth or even between them but His, no power but His power, and no existing knowledge but his knowledge. No insignificant particle is an exception to this order, and indubitably, nothing but the Singular Essence is independent or autonomous.

Therefore, as the whole world relies on this basis, God has created man to comprehend this significance, to achieve knowledge, and to understand the fact; He has assigned a soaring force in the mind of man to ascend to that Court. This is the very truth and nature given only to man.

On the other hand, we know that God has created every creature in the most perfect way; that is, there is no defect in His creation. As He states:

الَّذِي أَحْسَنَ كُلَّ شَيْءٍ خَلَقَهُ وَبَدَأَ خَلْقَ الْإِنسَانِ مِن طِينٍ.

...Who originated in the finest way whatever He created, and began the creation of man from clay. (32:7)

And despite His perfect creation, He guides every creature towards perfection.

قَالَ فَمَن رَّبُّكُمَا يَا مُوسَىٰ قَالَ رَبُّنَا الَّذِي أَعْطَىٰ كُلَّ شَيْءٍ خَلْقَهُ ثُمَّ هَدَىٰ.

He said: "O Moses, who is your Lord?" He said: "Our Lord is One Who has created man and guided him." (20:49–50)

To his question, Moses said: "Our Lord is He Who has given to every creature whatever is necessary for its creation and completion, and then He guides it towards perfection." Among these countless entities, which have all been created perfectly and are moving towards the destination, man has also been created on the basis of the Divine nature and the Essence of Unity. Therefore, man must be guided towards perfection and to reveal his dormant talents. If he moves on the straight path, he reaches his destination, but if he is in a dilemma or in wonder, then like a homeless bird in the stormy weather, thunderclaps, and lightning, he hits himself here and there until he vanishes. He ruins himself before using his talent and demonstrating his God-given instincts. It has been stated:

يا أيُّهَا الإنسانُ إنَّكَ كادِحٌ إلى رَبِّكَ كَدْحاً فَمُلاقيهِ فَأمّا مَنْ أوتِيَ كِتابَهُ بِيَمينِهِ فَسَوْفَ يُحاسَبُ حِساباً يَسيراً وَ يَنْقَلِبُ إلى أهْلِهِ مَسْرُوراً وَأمّا مَنْ أوتِيَ كِتابَهُ وَراءَ ظَهْرِهِ فَسَوْفَ يَدْعُوا ثُبوراً وَيَصْلى سَعيراً.

...O man, you are indeed laboring toward your Lord, and you will encounter Him! Then he who is given his book in his right hand will surely have an easy reckoning, and he will cheerfully return to his folk. But whoso is given his book from behind his back, he will wail and appeal to be blotted out and will burn in the Blaze. (84:6–12)

Thus, a man must be educated and trained in the best way so as to reach perfection; that is why the Qur'an has been sent down with the truth; as is stated:

اللهُ الَّذي أنزَلَ الكِتابَ بِالحَقِّ وَالمِيزانَ.

...it is God Who sent down this Book with truth along with [a true] Balance. (42:17)

And God sent His Holy Messenger with the truth and the right religion:

هُوَ الَّذي أرسَلَ رَسولَهُ بِالهُدى وَدينِ الحَقِّ.

...It is He Who has sent His Messenger with the guidance and the religion of truth. (61:9)

The Religious Laws Are Based on Monotheism

The religion brought by the Prophet is correct—without any fault or vanity in it. It can fulfill the need of every individual and lead them all to true perfection and Monotheism.

Islam is the religion of Monotheism; that is, all its ethics and teachings are based on Monotheism, and its lawmaker and legislator is Monotheism. Therefore, these laws have been revealed on the basis of Monotheism, and if they are implemented, they are also elevated on the basis of it.

It is similar to the world's laws and party structures—particular teachings spring form the spirit of the party and form its ideas and opinions.

Islam is also like those parties, but it receives the order directly from Monotheism. Monotheism means that everything—that is, everything without exception—is in God's Hands. He has power and authority over everything—nothing else has any value or autonomy parallel to His. All the laws of Islam are based on this fact.

A real Muslim, abiding by these rules, considers himself to be connected to the whole world; therefore, he does not spurn anyone. He is always friendly with people, tries to associate with everyone, and considers it his duty to visit blood relations and patients. He looks after the needy and is affectionate to the poor and destitute, and he donates to charities and enjoys doing thousands of good works that bring comfort and happiness to society—it is then he realizes that he is connected to the Main Source of Being.

Therefore, we see that the rules of *jihād* are entirely compatible with all other acts of worship, because *jihād* is to guide those who have gone astray, and not for territorial expansion, pillaging property, or plundering belongings—so, there is no aggression in the rules of Islam. That is why its teachings are free of deviance such as killing women and children, setting fire to trees and property, cutting off the water supply to the thirsty, and launching toxic weapons.

It is just, because *jihād* is guiding the people, not hurting them for one's own benefit. *Jihād* is an act of worship just like prayer.

Marriage and divorce appear to be contradictories but are in fact wholly compatible with each other.

The Holy Qur'an says that a man must either keep his wife in the most decent manner, or, if he wants to separate, he must divorce her in the best way—he must not cause her hardship when divorcing her. He has to pay off any outstanding dowry. He must pay it to her even if it is a cow-hide full of gold coins and jewelry—he must not withhold a

single dirham of it or even hurt her feelings. In fact, divorce is linked to mercy and love.

It is obvious that in Islam every good act which leads a man to mercifulness, friendship, and kindness is emphasized. Conversely, one is discouraged from doing the opposite: making people angry, causing enmity and division, secluding oneself from others, finding fault with them, making false accusations, thinking the worst of them, calling them names that they would not like, or vilifying, insulting, or spying on them.

Islam says: a Muslim must think the best of others, look favorably on brother believers, and look at every single thing with regard to its link to God. Monotheism is also a favorable view. A Muslim should have affection for others, not be proud, and give some of his wealth to the poor and destitute. He must not hoard gold or silver or be worldly; he must labor and give some of what he reaps to the needy for God's sake. All these laws and commandments are a mercy.

If a person practices them in his life, they will raise him up to Monotheism and make him reach his Source and Origin, in contrast to non-Islamic laws based on division, opportunism, self-interest, and acquisition of profit. They lead to division and the severing of a person's link to this world. Everyone thinks that he is separate from this world and strives to ensure his own survival even at the expense of another's.

We see this clearly even in developed countries, because they chase after self-interest, unconcerned with the poor and with deprivation suffered by other countries. Their goal is the acquisition of profit for their own benefit, and so they consider themselves to be unconnected to the rest of the world.

مُنِيبِينَ إِلَيْهِ وَاتَّقُوهُ وَأَقِيمُوا الصَّلَاةَ وَلَا تَكُونُوا مِنَ الْمُشْرِكِينَ مِنَ الَّذِينَ فَرَّقُوا دِينَهُمْ وَكَانُوا شِيَعًا كُلُّ حِزْبٍ بِمَا لَدَيْهِمْ فَرِحُونَ

Turn unto Him (only); and be careful of your duty unto Him and establish worship, and be not of those who ascribe partners (unto Him); of those who split up their religion and became sects, each sect exulting in its tenets. (30:31–32)

Islam says: "Set ye all off towards God, cast off the cloak of polytheism, and avoid anything that steers you away from Monotheism. To reach this stage, you should establish prayer and not be one of those disbelievers who have based their rules on division, separating into groups and factions."

The belief of this pure religion is that God alone is *the Doer of whatever He wills*, and it sees Him as the only agent of effect, cultivator,

and perfecter; it sees all beings as God's work and legacy, ruled by His powerful wish and will. It is contrary to other principles and customs not based on Monotheism, which consider man to be the agent of effect.

Polytheism of whatever level forces something else instead of God into the world of existence. The result of that is that it considers something else instead of God to be the agent of effect and God to be affected. A person who relies on his own actions casts God aside—or so he believes—and considers Him to be affected. Inattention to God is also a level of polytheism and has the same effect.

To guide and direct the creatures towards the truth and the facts of the universe, which all are shaded by Monotheism, the Qur'an says:

أَلَكُمُ الذَّكَرُ وَلَهُ الْأُنْثَى • تِلْكَ إِذًا قِسْمَةٌ ضِيزَى • إِنْ هِيَ إِلَّا أَسْمَاءٌ سَمَّيْتُمُوهَا أَنْتُمْ وَآبَاؤُكُمْ مَا أَنْزَلَ اللَّهُ بِهَا مِنْ سُلْطَانٍ إِنْ يَتَّبِعُونَ إِلَّا الظَّنَّ وَمَا تَهْوَى الْأَنْفُسُ وَلَقَدْ جَاءَهُمْ مِنْ رَبِّهِمُ الْهُدَى

Are yours the males and His the females? That would indeed be an unfair division! They are but names which ye have named, ye and your fathers, for which God hath revealed no warrant. They follow but a guess and that which (they) themselves desire. And now the guidance from their Lord hath come unto them. (53:21–23)

The Qur'an Is Guidance, but Only through the Imam

Therefore, whoever has reached the level of true Monotheism and complete certainty has reached the level of humanity; but if he has not yet attained that state, he is deficient and needs to be taught some manners. The people's teacher should be a perfect person, because an imperfect one cannot teach people or lead them towards perfection.

The meaning of the religion is not merely performing some good deeds and delighting in saying:

كفانا كتاب الله.

...The Book of God is enough for us.

The Qur'an alone cannot lead the people without a person conversant with the Qur'an's truths!

Surely it is the Imam, the teacher of the Qur'an, knower of the basis of and reason behind the laws, and most aware of the benefits and detriments that are the reasons and bases of them.

ثُمَّ جَعَلْنَاكَ عَلَى شَرِيعَةٍ مِنَ الْأَمْرِ فَاتَّبِعْهَا وَلَا تَتَّبِعْ أَهْوَاءَ الَّذِينَ لَا يَعْلَمُونَ إِنَّهُمْ لَنْ يُغْنُوا عَنْكَ مِنَ اللَّهِ شَيْئًا وَإِنَّ الظَّالِمِينَ بَعْضُهُمْ أَوْلِيَاءُ بَعْضٍ وَاللَّهُ وَلِيُّ الْمُتَّقِينَ

...then We appointed you upon a highroad of the command [of God]; so follow along it and do not follow the desires of those who do not know. (45:18–19)

They [can] never help you against God; for indeed the wrong-doers are allies of one another, while God is the protector of the God-fearing.

The Imam can support a man and then lead him to the absolute truth.

And now, as it is understood that the creation of Heaven and Earth, and also the creation of the human race, as well as the revelation of the Qur'an and the Prophet, are all based on the Truth; therefore, man must find his way to the Truth and set out towards it, ultimately reaching Monotheism.

So, the question is: is it possible to cover this distance without the assistance of the Leader (the Imam)? And was the training and instruction taken away after the death of the Prophet?! And was the favor of God towards His creatures only during the lifetime of the Messenger, after whose passing away, God left His creatures on their own, wandering down blind alleys? Is the name and the custom of the Messenger enough to direct man to the destination of perfection after the death of the Messenger? Is there not a need for an aware and certain man as Imam to guide the people? Are the instructions of the Qur'an enough for those who half-know and even the unlearned, to guide them to the main Source of the Truth? Can physical good deeds—prayer, fasting, rightfulness and refraining from theft—lead one to one's ideal destination?

It is said that in some lands, such as Switzerland, people never lie, steal things or betray...

It is true that man mostly behaves according to his previous training and educational background; but the problem is that this kind of behavior is related to one's field of education but not to his sense and piety.

I have personally observed it in some villages. Once when I was in a small town I saw that one early morning a dairy farmer was leading the cattle to the field to graze. Whenever he passed the houses some sheep would leave the houses and join the cattle. Later in the evening, when the dairy farmer was leading the cattle back to the town, each sheep would leave the cattle and enter the house through the gate it had come out through in the morning.

It is obvious that this kind of habit that has become ingrained in the animal is not praiseworthy.

A good tape-recorder receives sound, and then without any interference it faithfully reproduces the sound; however, this process is neither praiseworthy nor remarkable. A European may not have been brought up monotheistic, but may still be merciful, generous, and righteous. If this is just upbringing and habit, is it praiseworthy?

How much truth and real humanity will a European laborer encounter, who goes to work early in the morning and works all through the day without being supervised by the bosses?

Nowadays, there are some machines that operate automatically—without human input—producing perfect goods. Then, after hours of constant work and a certain output, they turn off automatically and stop operating.

Now, do these machines deserve praise and appreciation for their superb and regular work?

The workers who control those machines are the same. They have been trained to do a particular job just like robots!

Although they do their work the best way possible, they have senses to ponder existence and the meaning of humanity! They lack the signs of the Truth and Monotheism. They are like inanimate objects and are manipulated by others. Because man was created instinctively religious, his journey towards perfection is something else; attaining higher levels of knowledge and awareness, discovering Divine secrets, and distinguishing fact and reality from fiction and fantasy are different from being like an inanimate object.

Man must pass through stages towards Monotheism, so apart from the Messenger, who is there to lead people through such stages? How can a teacher who only knows basic mathematics teach his students advanced mathematics? And how can he teach advanced quantum mechanics? It is absolutely impossible; no matter how hard he tries, he cannot teach his students beyond his own limited knowledge. So, how can a person who is not monotheistic, who has not freed himself from the devil's level or lust, lead people to perfection and Monotheism? This is entirely unfeasible; it would have to be said that God no longer wishes to guide people or lead them towards perfection, which is not right because everything that exists—Heaven, Earth and everything between them—was created with a purpose. In other words they are not on their own, vain and meaningless. They need a guide and leader to lead them to perfection. In this case, the leader must be the most perfect so as to be able to guide the people. The conclusion to our discussion is that just as the legislation of laws is based on truth, so too is the dispatch of the

Greatest Messenger and the appointment of the Imam who is perfect and teaches people up to the highest level of humanity, actualization of potential placed in them by God, and Monotheism.

The Position of the Imamate Is Only for the Devoted

However, when one has not reached the state of Monotheism and the highest degree of humanity, it means Satan has not left him alone. His situation is not yet clear. He is still in the darkness of disbelief, albeit covert disbelief. He is not yet certain of the right way; his belief is still just emulation. With his false desires, he superficially maintains his belief but has not scrutinized the level of his belief. He is the captive of his desires, so he cannot make a good teacher. Thus, it is stated:

فَاجْتَنِبُوا الرِّجْسَ مِنَ الْأَوْثَانِ وَاجْتَنِبُوا قَوْلَ الزُّورِ حُنَفَاءَ لِلَّهِ غَيْرَ مُشْرِكِينَ بِهِ وَمَنْ يُشْرِكْ بِاللَّهِ فَكَأَنَّمَا خَرَّ مِنَ السَّمَاءِ فَتَخْطَفُهُ الطَّيْرُ أَوْ تَهْوِي بِهِ الرِّيحُ فِي مَكَانٍ سَحِيقٍ

...So avoid the filth of idols (the spirit of lasciviousness) and refrain from false speech, being faithful to God, and not associating any ally with Him. In addition, anyone who ascribes partners to God, as if he had fallen out of the sky and the birds had snatched him away, or the wind had blown him to some far off place... (22:30–31)

A man who has not reached the level of perfection is still captive to his internal desires and has not found a way out of the darkness of his aspirations to reach the open world full of brightness, as per:

ارجِعِي إِلَىٰ رَبِّكِ رَاضِيَةً

Turn to your Lord with satisfaction. (89:28)

فَادْخُلِي فِي عِبَادِي وَادْخُلِي جَنَّتِي

So join My obedient worshippers, and enter My Paradise. (89:29)

He will, even if he attains the highest position in life, still be plunged into deep darkness and disbelief. He always encounters difficulties and will be shaken by minor trials and difficulties. He will be swept away by the thunderbolt of desire, love of power, and prestige stronger than love of wealth and children, and even love of life. He will be swept away to the desert of loss and desert of wretchedness, handed over to doom and destruction:

وَلَا يَزَالُ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا تُصِيبُهُم بِمَا صَنَعُوا قَارِعَةٌ أَوْ تَحُلُّ قَرِيبًا مِّن دَارِهِمْ حَتَّىٰ يَأْتِيَ وَعْدُ اللَّهِ إِنَّ اللَّهَ لَا يُخْلِفُ الْمِيعَادَ

Disaster will continually afflict those who disbelieve because of what they produce, or it will settle down close to their home until the permission of God comes true. Surely God does not break the appointment [of His]. (13:30–31)

So how can a man who is always in the panic of unseen disasters, with endless desires and aspirations in his heart and the army of the devil manipulating his thoughts, give any help to the people? Can he be a leader to see to the nation's weak points and guide them to true perfection?

Abū Bakr Admits His Weakness

Abū Qutaybah Dīnawarī, one of the greatest early Sunni scholars and acknowledged as such by most Sunnis, says:

After the death of the Prophet, Abū Bakr ascended the Prophet's pulpit and delivered this sermon:

وَلَقَدْ وُلِّيتُ امْرًا عَظِيمًا مَالِي بِهِ طَاقَةٌ وَلَا يَدٌ، وَلَوَدِدْتُ أَنِّي وَجَدْتُ أَقْوَى النَّاسِ عَلَيْهِ مَكَانِي، فَأَطِيعُونِي مَا أَطَعْتُ اللَّهَ فَإِذَا عَصَيْتُ اللَّهَ فَلَا طَاعَةَ لِي عَلَيْكُمْ. ثُمَّ بَكَى وَقَالَ: اعْلَمُوا أَيُّهَا النَّاسُ أَنِّي لَمْ أَجْعَلْ لِهَذَا الْمَكَانِ أَنْ أَكُونَ خَيْرَكُمْ وَلَوَدِدْتُ أَنَّ بَعْضَكُمْ كَفَانِيهِ وَلَئِنْ أَخَذْتُمُونِي بِمَا كَانَ اللَّهُ يُقِيمُ بِهِ مِنَ الْوَحْيِ مَا كَانَ ذَلِكَ عِنْدِي وَمَا أَنَا إِلَّا كَأَحَدِكُمْ، فَإِذَا رَأَيْتُمُونِي قَدِ اسْتَقَمْتُ فَاتَّبِعُونِي وَإِنْ زُغْتُ فَقَوِّمُونِي. وَاعْلَمُوا أَنَّ شَيْطَانًا يَعْتَرِينِي أَحْيَانًا فَإِذَا رَأَيْتُمُونِي فَاجْتَنِبُونِي، لَا أُؤَثِّرُ فِي أَشْعَارِكُمْ وَأَبْشَارِكُمْ، ثُمَّ نَزَلَ

> I have been given a great mandate that I cannot fulfill. I wish I could find someone more capable instead, so obey me as long as I obey God, but when I disobey God then do not obey me.

Then he cried and said:

> O people, know that I was not put in this place to be the best among you; I would like someone among you to support me. If you think I have the revelation that God provided the Messenger with, I do not. I am just like one of you, so if you see me going straight, follow me, but if I err, straighten me out.
> Know that I have a devil who sometimes dominates me, so if you see me angry, avoid me—I am no better than you, in hair or skin.[65]

When he was unable to answer the people's questions he would say:

سَأقُولُ فيها برأيي

I will tell you my opinion on it.[66]

And whenever he was tired and couldn't solve a problem, he would say:

Which Heaven will shade me?[67]

How can such a person who confesses that he has not yet been released from the devil and the spirit of lasciviousness, now and then commits sins, and is from time to time embraced by Satan, carry on the task of the Imamate?

He wanted not only the weak and common people in the nation to follow him, but also great men such as Salmān, Abū Dharr, 'Ammār, Miqdād, Ḥudhayfah, Jābir ibn 'Abdullāh al-Anṣārī, and even the Master of the Faithful! He ordered them to pledge allegiance to him and carry out his commands. Then, he ordered 'Umar to fight and kill whoever stood against him and said:

فإن أبوا فقاتِلهم

If they resist, fight them.[68]

This, even though he knows full well that the Master of the Faithful is the kernel of the Islam and the blissful guide of the nation.

The Master of the Faithful said:

أما واللهِ لقد تقمصها ابنِ أبي قحافة وإنه ليعلم أن محلّي مِنها محلّ القطبِ مِن الرّحى ينحدِر عنّي السّيل و لا يرقى إليّ الطّير.

By God, the son of Abū Qaḥāfa has worn it as a shirt, even though he surely knows that I am in relation to it as an axis is to a handmill. The flood water flows down from me and the bird cannot fly up to me.[69]

Here, the Holiness says that he knew a millstone without the axis could not run; then when running idle, the stones would wear out. Not only can they not grind the wheat, but they can harm the miller and the mill.

It is so stated:

أَمْ حَسِبَ الَّذِينَ اجْتَرَحُوا السَّيِّئَاتِ أَن نَّجْعَلَهُمْ كَالَّذِينَ آمَنُوا وَعَمِلُوا الصَّالِحَاتِ سَوَاءً مَّحْيَاهُمْ وَمَمَاتُهُمْ سَاءَ مَا يَحْكُمُونَ،

أَمْ حَسِبَ الَّذِينَ يَعْمَلُونَ السَّيِّئَاتِ أَن يَسْبِقُونَا سَاءَ مَا يَحْكُمُونَ،

وَلَا يَحْسَبَنَّ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا سَبَقُوا إِنَّهُمْ لَا يُعْجِزُونَ.

Or do those who commit evil deeds think that We will treat them like those who believe and perform good deeds—the same in life and death? Bad is their judgment! (21:59)

Or do those who commit evil deeds think that they can outstrip Us? Bad is their judgment! (29:4)

And let not those who disbelieve suppose that they can outstrip. Lo! They cannot escape. (8:59)

Lesson Nineteen:
A Majority Vote Is Not the Criterion on Which an Infallible Imam Is Elected

LESSON NINETEEN

In the Name of God, the Merciful, the Compassionate
And blessing upon Mohammad and his pure Household, and God's curse on his enemies from now until the Day of Resurrection! There is no power or strength except through the Great, Lofty God.

The Wise God states in His Glorious Book:

يا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا أَطِيعُوا اللهَ وَأَطِيعُوا الرَّسُولَ وَأُولِي الأَمْرِ مِنكُمْ فَإِن تَنَازَعْتُمْ فِي شَيْءٍ فَرُدُّوهُ إِلَى اللهِ وَالرَّسُولِ إِن كُنتُمْ تُؤْمِنُونَ بِاللهِ وَالْيَوْمِ الآخِرِ ذَلِكَ خَيْرٌ وَأَحْسَنُ تَأْوِيلًا

O ye who believe! Obey God, and obey the Messenger and those of you who are in authority; and if ye have a dispute concerning any matter, refer it to God and the Messenger if ye are (in truth) believers in God and the Last Day. That is better and more seemly in the end. (4:59)

It was stated above that the creation of Heaven, Earth, everything between them both, and man, the revelation of the Divine Book and dispatch of the Holy Messenger (blessing upon him and his Descendants) were based on the truth. The explicit verses of the Qur'an prove that there is no way for any untruth or vanity ever to have interfered in the regulation of creation and the guidance of man towards perfection. Therefore, God's commandments and prohibitions are also based on truth and lead to the truth; it is because these commandments and prohibitions are on the road of those same creationary principles, confirming the harmony of creation. It is inconceivable that God would enjoin falsehood, because it misleads man from the straight path; it diverts man from the course to perfection and blessing. It is concluded that God's law is in accordance with His creationary decree, not against it. As He says:

وَاللهُ يَقُولُ الْحَقَّ وَهُوَ يَهْدِي السَّبِيلَ

But God saith the truth and He showeth the way. (33:4)

وَيَرَى الَّذِينَ أُوتُوا الْعِلْمَ الَّذِي أُنزِلَ إِلَيْكَ مِن رَّبِّكَ هُوَ الْحَقَّ وَيَهْدِي إِلَى صِرَاطِ الْعَزِيزِ الْحَمِيدِ

Those who have been given knowledge see that what is revealed unto thee from thy Lord is the truth and leadeth unto the path of the Mighty, the Praiseworthy. (34:6)

Therefore, God never commands anything meaningless or invalid or enjoins following crimes, oppression, or anything against the truth.

Following *those in authority,* unconditional obedience to whom is referred to in the aforementioned verses, is synonymous with following and obeying God; otherwise, it would be against the Divine will. Hence, those referred to in this verse have to be infallible, and their sayings and actions and similarly their lifestyle and custom have to be righteous.

Many or indeed all Sunnis say that it is not necessary for *those in authority* to be infallible—an Imam can be chosen by the majority or pursuant to the allegiance pledged by those involved in politics. Then, according to the meaning of the verse, he can be obeyed and followed. This suggestion is contrary to the meaning of the Qur'an and the laws of the religion, because an Imam has spiritual qualities known only to the Knower of the Unseen, the Knower of secret thoughts and affairs, such as infallibility, spiritual purity, internal holiness and purity linked to the Imam's self, which make him immune to saying or doing anything untrue and which direct him by keeping him away from whims and desires. Another is knowledge with the presence of which nothing remains unknown to him. There are many other attributes that cannot come to sight and of which no one is aware; as is stated:

وَرَبُّكَ يَعْلَمُ مَا تُكِنُّ صُدُورُهُمْ وَمَا يُعْلِنُونَ

And thy Lord knoweth what their breasts conceal, and what they publish. (28:69)

اللهُ أَعْلَمُ حَيْثُ يَجْعَلُ رِسَالَتَهُ

God knows where to place His message. (6:124)

The Majority's Inability to Elect the Imam

Therefore, how can people blind to the virtues and Divine knowledge choose someone conferred with the fairest virtues and spiritual attributes? If they decide to do so then they will certainly lose their way and go astray.

It is similar to Moses, upon him and his descendants be peace, who chose from thousands of people just seventy, but they proved to be so proud that they asked him to see God:

أَرِنَا اللهَ جَهْرَةً

Show us God plainly. (4:153)

What is expected of the choice of the common people, who incline towards those who provide whatever the people instinctively want and safeguard their material matters and whatever they desire? There is no logical reason to believe that they will not err by choosing the wrong person as the ruler—they will surely do so.

How often they vote in treacherous people who hide behind the curtain of honesty. In this way, their crimes are covered up and no one becomes aware of their aim and action. The poor people are unaware of their tricks and what is going on in their minds. Even if they are aware, they cannot do anything about it. The candidate elected then drags them to the Hell of perdition, as came to light when people were paying homage to Mu'āwiyah, Yazīd, and the other Umayyads.

How can God, Who created all creation right and with truth, leave the choice of Imam with His creatures, the people who are unable to run their lives and are in need of guides and instructors? It is stated:

وَرَبُّكَ يَخْلُقُ مَا يَشَاءُ وَيَخْتَارُ مَا كَانَ لَهُمُ الْخِيَرَةُ

Your Lord creates whatever He wills and chooses. They have no choice. (28:68)

The Prophet had drawn people's attention to this fact from the very first day of spreading and propagating his invitation among the tribes. When he made his presentation to the Banī 'Āmir ibn Ṣa'ṣa'ah, one of them asked the Prophet: "If we follow you and God makes you prevail over whoever opposes you, will we be in charge after you pass away?" He replied: "The affair is up to God; He places it wherever He pleases."[70] [As He has stated]:

وَمَا كَانَ لِمُؤْمِنٍ وَلَا مُؤْمِنَةٍ إِذَا قَضَى اللهُ وَرَسُولُهُ أَمْرًا أَنْ يَكُونَ لَهُمُ الْخِيَرَةُ مِنْ أَمْرِهِمْ وَمَنْ يَعْصِ اللهَ وَرَسُولَهُ فَقَدْ ضَلَّ ضَلَالًا مُبِينًا

And it becomes not a believing man or a believing woman, when God and His Messenger have decided an affair, that they should claim any say in their affair; and whoever is rebellious to God and His Messenger, verily goes astray in error manifest.

How can people choose their Imam when they are caught up in disputes, conflicts, lust, and passion, and have differences of opinion over belief? It is in these circumstances impossible for them to choose the right one, especially with the countless sects and sub-sects, each of which has its own rogues—this is a chronic ongoing problem.

When the Infallibles' rights have been breached, chaos has ensued. There has been fighting and bloodshed, weaker people's property has been plundered, opposition parties have been defamed, and the rule of law has been ignored. The bounds have been transgressed, the rights of others have been breached, and the righteous religion has been altered. That is what happened to Islam, whose branches spread over a basis of truth and justice. Instead dishonest oppressive rulers have seized power and governed the wretched people, doing the most wicked things to poor nations.

The fact is, the caliph must be an infallible person appointed by God. Furthermore, a caliph may come across the most serious questions or scientific problems of his time for which he must have answers. If he says something at random or gives a piece of his mind, or, if he lacks the wisdom and refers the matter to someone wiser to answer the question or address the problem, he damages God's laws and commandments and lowers his standing in society. The Imam, who is the spiritual statesman in charge of the people, takes the Messenger's place and must be obeyed—as is stated:

وَمَا أَرْسَلْنَا مِن رَّسُولٍ إِلَّا لِيُطَاعَ بِإِذْنِ اللَّهِ

We sent no Messenger save that he should be obeyed by God's leave. (4:64)

He will carry out the Divine punishments and eliminate falsehood to the best of his ability. However, his inability to answer questions may weaken the faith in him of the person and make him doubt him.

قُلْ هَلْ يَسْتَوِي الَّذِينَ يَعْلَمُونَ وَالَّذِينَ لَا يَعْلَمُونَ إِنَّمَا يَتَذَكَّرُ أُولُو الْأَلْبَابِ

Say: Are those who know equal with those who know not? But only men of understanding will pay heed. (39:9)

قُلْ هَلْ يَسْتَوِي الْأَعْمَى وَالْبَصِيرُ أَمْ هَلْ تَسْتَوِي الظُّلُمَاتُ وَالنُّورُ

Say: Is the blind man equal to the seer, or is darkness equal to light? (13:16)

In this case, the inferior will rise against the superior, those in the wrong against those in the right, and ignorance against awareness. They will then go hand in hand to cause corruption.

أَمْ يَقُولُونَ بِهِ جِنَّةٌ بَلْ جَاءَهُمْ بِالْحَقِّ وَأَكْثَرُهُمْ لِلْحَقِّ كَارِهُونَ وَلَوِ اتَّبَعَ الْحَقُّ أَهْوَاءَهُمْ لَفَسَدَتِ السَّمَاوَاتُ وَالْأَرْضُ وَمَنْ فِيهِنَّ بَلْ أَتَيْنَاهُمْ بِذِكْرِهِمْ فَهُمْ عَنْ ذِكْرِهِمْ مُعْرِضُونَ.

Or say they: There is a madness in him? Nay, but he bringeth them the Truth; and most of them are haters of the Truth. And if the Truth had followed their desires, verily the heavens and the earth and whosoever is therein would have been corrupted. Nay, We have brought them their Reminder, but from their Reminder they now turn away. (23:70–71)

The majority of people pay no heed to the truth and pursue their own interests, so how can the majority understand? They vote for whoever safeguards their material, greedy interests. How can a small child appreciate his teacher or school principal? With proper policy and design a principal can make the children study the lesson, and pursuant to his plan, about which the pupils know nothing, instruct them and prepare each one to find his way in life. This truth dominates their thoughts and desires, and in the light of it, the school is organized; everything is in its place and runs smoothly.

Let us suppose that some pupils were free to choose their own principal. They would choose someone who sides with them, stops teaching, and lets them play on their own! If the children were asked what would be good for them to do at school, their answer would be to shut down the school. So should the adults be condemned to do what the children demand, dismiss the sympathetic expert principal, and employ a clumsy one to amuse the children? Rather, thousands of votes are worthless in this instance, and hundreds of schools are full of pupils unable to perform the task of a wise principal.

People are the same—they mostly suffer from ruinous passions, materialism, and lusts, and their minds are filled with personal revenge, ignorance, and temporary pleasures. Therefore, as they are narrow-minded and cannot foresee the future of the nation's affairs, if they are given authority, they will lead the people down a blind alley.

Verses in the Holy Qur'an That Say That Most People Go Astray

وَإِنْ تُطِعْ أَكْثَرَ مَنْ فِي الْأَرْضِ يُضِلُّوكَ عَنْ سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ إِنْ يَتَّبِعُونَ إِلَّا الظَّنَّ وَإِنْ هُمْ إِلَّا يَخْرُصُونَ.

If you obey most of those on earth they will mislead you far from God's way. They follow nothing but conjecture, and they do nothing but lie. (6:116)

وَإِنَّ كَثِيرًا لَّيُضِلُّونَ بِأَهْوَائِهِم بِغَيْرِ عِلْمٍ

But lo! Many are led astray by their own lusts through ignorance. (6:119)

If the majority vote is correct, then the pagans from Quraysh should have been asked for their opinion regarding the Noble Messenger's call in Mecca. It is confirmed that they thought he should be cut into pieces, because all those involved in politics and those in authority in Mecca gathered in one place at Dār al-Nadwah, and voted unanimously to kill him. They then chose braves to fulfill the task.

Similarly most of the pagans, such as Abū Sufyān, resolved to prepare an army to send to Medina to fight the Prophet, uproot Islam, and dishonor the women—after taking votes and following the decision taken by those involved in politics. They started war and caused enormous loss and disasters to the people.

This is how ignorant and heedless people think, and this same principle was common to people throughout the ages even if it was manifested differently in each age. It was the same with the tribe of the Prophet in the days of ignorance.

Their plans were based on voting and materialism. It was why they became the Prophet's enemies and always acted against his will.

وَلَقَدْ آتَيْنَا مُوسَى الْكِتَابَ وَقَفَّيْنَا مِن بَعْدِهِ بِالرُّسُلِ وَآتَيْنَا عِيسَى ابْنَ مَرْيَمَ الْبَيِّنَاتِ وَأَيَّدْنَاهُ بِرُوحِ الْقُدُسِ أَفَكُلَّمَا جَاءَكُمْ رَسُولٌ بِمَا لَا تَهْوَىٰ أَنفُسُكُمُ اسْتَكْبَرْتُمْ فَفَرِيقًا كَذَّبْتُمْ وَفَرِيقًا تَقْتُلُونَ.

And verily We gave unto Moses the Scripture and We caused a train of Messengers to follow after him, and We gave unto Jesus, son of Mary, clear proofs, and We supported him with the Holy Spirit. Is it ever so, that, when there cometh unto you a Messenger with that which ye yourselves desire not, ye grow arrogant, and some ye disbelieve and some ye slay? (2:87)

Therefore, the majority almost always go astray, in pursuit of self-interest. In a verse in *The Poets*, God refers to eight different aspects of the bad behavior of the people of eight Messengers: Mohammad, the Seal of the Messengers' people, Moses' people, Abraham's people, Noah's people, Hūd's people, Ṣāliḥ's people, and Lot and Jethro's people. He refers to their grudges and says about our Prophet's people:

وَمَا كَانَ أَكْثَرُهُم مُّؤْمِنِينَ.

...yet most of them are not believers (26:8, 67, 103, 121, 139, 158, 174, and 190).

He also says:

فَانظُرُوا كَيْفَ كَانَ عَاقِبَةُ الَّذِينَ مِن قَبْلُ كَانَ أَكْثَرُهُم مُّشْرِكِينَ.

...and see the nature of the consequence for those who were before you! Most of them were polytheists. (30:42).

He also says about the Messenger's people:

وَمَا يُؤْمِنُ أَكْثَرُهُم بِاللَّهِ إِلَّا وَهُم مُّشْرِكُونَ.

And most of them do not believe in God without being polytheists. (12:106)

لَقَدْ حَقَّ الْقَوْلُ عَلَىٰ أَكْثَرِهِمْ فَهُمْ لَا يُؤْمِنُونَ.

The Word has proved true against most of them: for they do not believe. (36:7)

وَمَا أَكْثَرُ النَّاسِ وَلَوْ حَرَصْتَ بِمُؤْمِنِينَ.

And most men will not believe though you desire it eagerly. (12:103)

He says elsewhere:

وَلَٰكِنَّ أَكْثَرَ النَّاسِ لَا يُؤْمِنُونَ.

...but most people do not believe. (11:17)

بَلْ أَكْثَرُ النَّاسِ لَا يُؤْمِنُونَ.

Nay, most of them do not believe. (2:100)

بَلْ جَاءَهُم بِالْحَقِّ وَأَكْثَرُهُمْ لِلْحَقِّ كَارِهُونَ.

Nay, he has brought them the Truth, but most of them hate the Truth. (23:70)

لَقَدْ جِئْنَاكُم بِالْحَقِّ وَلَٰكِنَّ أَكْثَرَكُمْ لِلْحَقِّ كَارِهُونَ.

We did indeed bring you the Truth, but most of you detest the Truth. (43:78)

وَإِنَّ كَثِيرًا مِّنَ النَّاسِ بِلِقَاءِ رَبِّهِمْ لَكَافِرُونَ.

But truly many of the people deny the meeting with their Lord. (30:8)

وَأَكْثَرُهُمُ الْكَافِرُونَ.

Most of them are ingrates. (16:83)

فَأَبَىٰ أَكْثَرُ النَّاسِ إِلَّا كُفُورًا.

...however, most people remain thankless. (25:50)

He also says that most people live debauched lives:

وَأَنَّ أَكْثَرَكُمْ فَاسِقُونَ.

...and because most of you are transgressors. (5:59)

وَإِن وَجَدْنَا أَكْثَرَهُمْ لَفَاسِقِينَ.

...but We found most of them to be transgressors. (7:102)

وَأَكْثَرُهُمُ الْفَاسِقُونَ.

...but most of them are transgressors. (3:110, 9:8)

He says that most people are ungrateful, and not thankful:

وَلَٰكِنَّ أَكْثَرَ النَّاسِ لَا يَشْكُرُونَ.

...but most people are not grateful. (2:243, 12:38, 40:61)

وَلَا تَجِدُ أَكْثَرَهُمْ شَاكِرِينَ.

...and you will not find most of them to be grateful. (7:17)

وَلَٰكِنَّ أَكْثَرَهُمْ لَا يَشْكُرُونَ.

...but most of them do not give thanks. (10:60, 27:73)

وَمَا وَجَدْنَا لِأَكْثَرِهِم مِّنْ عَهْدٍ.

We found no (loyalty to any) covenant in most of them. (7:102)

He says that most of them follow conjecture and have no certainty in their deeds:

وَمَا يَتَّبِعُ أَكْثَرُهُمْ إِلَّا ظَنًّا.

Most of them follow nothing but conjecture. (10:36)

He also says they are ignorant:

وَلَٰكِنَّ أَكْثَرَهُمْ يَجْهَلُونَ.

...but most of them are ignorant. (6:111)

He says that most people are heedless and do not use reason:

وَأَكْثَرُهُمْ لَا يَعْقِلُونَ.

Most of them have no sense. (5:103)

بَلْ أَكْثَرُهُمْ لَا يَعْقِلُونَ.

Nay, most of them have no sense. (29:63)

He says that most people do not listen to the truth and the true invitation:

كِتَابٌ فُصِّلَتْ آيَاتُهُ قُرْآنًا عَرَبِيًّا لِقَوْمٍ يَعْلَمُونَ بَشِيرًا وَنَذِيرًا فَأَعْرَضَ أَكْثَرُهُمْ فَهُمْ لَا يَسْمَعُونَ.

A Scripture whereof the verses are expounded, an Arabic recital (Qur'an) *for people who have knowledge, good tidings and a warning. But most of them turn away so that they hear not.* (41:3–4)

أَمْ تَحْسَبُ أَنَّ أَكْثَرَهُمْ يَسْمَعُونَ أَوْ يَعْقِلُونَ.

Or do you think that most of them hear and understand? (25:44)

He says that many of them take no notice of His verses:

وَإِنَّ كَثِيرًا مِنَ النَّاسِ عَنْ آيَاتِنَا لَغَافِلُونَ.

Lo! Most people are heedless of Our portents. (10:92)

And on twenty-four separate occasions He says that most people do not understand; He uses similar phrases in nine other verses:

وَلَٰكِنَّ أَكْثَرَ النَّاسِ لَا يَعْلَمُونَ.

...though most people do not know. (7:187, 12:21, 16:38, 30:6–30, 34:28–36, 40:57, 45:26)

And in some places He states:

وَلَٰكِنَّ أَكْثَرَهُمْ لَا يَعْلَمُونَ.

...but most of them do not know. (6:37)

And in nine different places He states:

وَلَٰكِنَّ أَكْثَرَهُمْ لَا يَعْلَمُونَ.

...yet most of them do not know. (6:37, 7:131, 8:34, 10:55, 28:13–57, 39:49, 44:39, 51:47)

He says in five different verses:

بَلْ أَكْثَرُهُمْ لَا يَعْلَمُونَ.

...rather most of them do not know. (16:57, 16:101, 27:61, 31:25, and 39:29)

He says elsewhere:

بَلْ أَكْثَرُهُمُ لَا يَعْلَمُونَ الْحَقَّ فَهُم مُّعْرِضُونَ.

No, most of them do not recognize the Truth so they are averse. (21:24)

The Rightful Imam Is Necessary to Guide Those Who Have Strayed—Who Are the Majority

Yes indeed, this is an exposition of most people's level of thought and pursuits, and levels of comprehension and understanding, explained by the Qur'an in the aforementioned verses. Now, can such people use all that to elect their Imam to guide them, an Imam free from sins and crimes, obedience to whom is obedience to God, an Imam to guide the people to the Truth and their perfection, an Imam to purify their souls and illuminate their hearts with the Light of the Divine, the Creator, an Imam to rescue them from their anxiety, worries, and mental disturbance and help them cross to calm and certainty and, to bring them out of polytheism and into Monotheism?

The Imam is one who always stands by the Truth—contrary to what the majority want, he guides them onto the straight path, brings them out of their lust and passions, and leads them towards piety and Monotheism. Of course, this is what people oppose; they have always resisted the Messengers and their instructions and guidance.

The Imam must be serious about fulfilling his work; he must teach and instruct people with good intention and determination. He must not take their passions or material desires into account; as is stated:

فَلِذَٰلِكَ فَادْعُ وَاسْتَقِمْ كَمَا أُمِرْتَ وَلَا تَتَّبِعْ أَهْوَاءَهُمْ وَقُلْ آمَنتُ بِمَا أَنزَلَ اللَّهُ مِن كِتَابٍ وَأُمِرْتُ لِأَعْدِلَ بَيْنَكُمُ

Unto this, then, summon. And be upright as you are commanded, and follow not their lusts, but say: I believe in whatever scripture God has sent down, and I am commanded to be just among you. (42:15)

قُلْ أَنَدْعُو مِن دُونِ اللَّهِ مَا لَا يَنفَعُنَا وَلَا يَضُرُّنَا وَنُرَدُّ عَلَىٰ أَعْقَابِنَا بَعْدَ إِذْ هَدَانَا اللَّهُ كَالَّذِي اسْتَهْوَتْهُ الشَّيَاطِينُ فِي الْأَرْضِ حَيْرَانَ لَهُ أَصْحَابٌ يَدْعُونَهُ إِلَى الْهُدَى ائْتِنَا قُلْ إِنَّ هُدَى اللَّهِ هُوَ الْهُدَىٰ وَأُمِرْنَا لِنُسْلِمَ لِرَبِّ الْعَالَمِينَ

Say: Shall we cry, instead of unto God, unto that which neither profits us nor hurts us, and shall we turn back after God has guided us, like one bewildered whom the devils have infatuated in the earth, who has companions who invite him to the guidance (saying): Come unto us? Say: Lo! God's guidance is the Guidance, and we are ordered to surrender to the Lord of the Worlds. (6:71)

وَلَن تَرْضَىٰ عَنكَ الْيَهُودُ وَلَا النَّصَارَىٰ حَتَّىٰ تَتَّبِعَ مِلَّتَهُمْ قُلْ إِنَّ هُدَى اللَّهِ هُوَ الْهُدَىٰ وَلَئِنِ اتَّبَعْتَ أَهْوَاءَهُم بَعْدَ الَّذِي جَاءَكَ مِنَ الْعِلْمِ مَا لَكَ مِنَ اللَّهِ مِن وَلِيٍّ وَلَا نَصِيرٍ

And the Jews will not be pleased with you, nor will the Christians, till you follow their creed. Say: Lo! God's guidance is the Guidance. And if you should follow their desires after the knowledge that has come unto you, then would you have from God no protecting guardian nor helper. (2:120)

وَلَئِنْ أَتَيْتَ الَّذِينَ أُوتُوا الْكِتَابَ بِكُلِّ آيَةٍ مَّا تَبِعُوا قِبْلَتَكَ وَمَا أَنتَ بِتَابِعٍ قِبْلَتَهُمْ وَمَا بَعْضُهُم بِتَابِعٍ قِبْلَةَ بَعْضٍ وَلَئِنِ اتَّبَعْتَ أَهْوَاءَهُم مِّن بَعْدِ مَا جَاءَكَ مِنَ الْعِلْمِ إِنَّكَ إِذًا لَّمِنَ الظَّالِمِينَ

And even if you brought unto those who have received the Scripture all kinds of portents, they would not follow thy qiblah, *nor can you be a follower of their* qiblah; *nor are some of them followers of the* qiblah *of others. And if you should follow their desires after the knowledge that has come unto you, then you will surely be of the wrong-doers.* (2:145)

All these verses are clear. They mean that we must obey God alone and not let others take control of us and lead us to nowhere according to their will; such people mislead the whole of society and impose their authority on them. They never support the Truth or stand by righteous people—they always keep away from decent people. Now, in this case,

can such narrow-minded people with little knowledge choose their own Imam to guide them to their ideal destination? The answer is never, ever!

Most people are the captives of their emotions and do not reach Perfection and their upper limit of wit and wisdom. Therefore, if they are given authority to vote for their leader or Imam, their choice will be based on their imaginations and fancies. By seeing the banners and the proclamations of the general election, or by hearing an exciting speech, they are lured to vote; often such banners and speakers are deceitful, their aim being to cheat the common citizens. In our lifetime, we have come across such propaganda, banners, and sensational lectures delivered for the benefit of a particular party, and so often we have noticed how common people have gotten excited and voted for the most deceitful one. Again, when circumstances change and another election approaches, some other rascals begin saying the same things, spending to buy baseless votes and promising, in their speeches, bright lives for the nation.

Now, can the election of the Imam in Islam, which is based on truth and obedience, the choice of such an Imam who is the source of blessing, generosity, and mercifulness, be delegated to the lowly people who know nothing about Divinity? It is absolutely impossible! Most people choose someone to satisfy their desires who is like them in manner and behavior. Otherwise, society will collapse, the nation will perish, and the base of justice will give way to injustice.

The point is that in any nation, one group of people thinks, behaves, and acts differently from another. Some of them are hardworking and persevere, and struggle and work hard to make progress in life and increase their knowledge. They start from scratch, and by following the right course may become as intelligent as philosophers, able to solve their own problems as well as those of their societies. They have clear consciences and are clever enough to understand what is going on around them; they are aware of the facts and discern the bad from the worse and the worst from the best with ease. With their vast knowledge and cleverness it becomes easier for them to tell which people are wise and intelligent; then, when an election is on the way, they can choose the right person in the right way.

Of course, in every society, such people are rare, and it is rather difficult to tell them apart from the populace at large.

Another group includes the people who are on the way to destiny, but have not yet approached perfection. They are still in the process of correcting themselves—constantly trying to reach the ideal destination by studying and attending different classes to increase their knowledge.

There are many of them and they can be found in every society. Nevertheless, they are still in the minority. Although they are not at the level of those in the first group, they are blessed with adequate knowledge and their own awareness.

The third group consists of the general public. They have neither knowledge nor perceptiveness, nor do they try to learn and acquaint themselves with the truth. They just pursue gaudiness. They are lured by anything that is attractive, no matter how trivial it may be. They are the gullible ones who, in an election, vote for anyone they come across. The members of this group fall for bombastic propagandists whose speeches are broadcast more in the mass media, and whose pictures are put in the papers or stuck on walls in every street and on tree trunks.

Let us suppose that the appointment of the Leader were left up to the electorate; in that case every individual's intelligence should determine how many votes he gets. For example, an ordinary common person gets one vote, a student ten, students of religious sciences get a hundred, scholars get a thousand, philosophers, mystics completely devoted to God get a hundred thousand; finally the Imam, who holds the position of guardian, and is the constant recipient of Divine illumination and the source of the religion, gets all the votes—as God's only agent—even in choosing the Leader.

This is the main logic of the Shi'a, who say the choice of Imam, named by the Messenger or the former Imam, is God's alone.

Now, you ignorant liberal of the time of ignorance! Do you allow the people to vote in this manner? Do you divide people into different ranks and groups, and then give them a number of votes commensurate with their levels and intention? It is obvious that there has to be another answer!

It is obvious that you give everyone one vote, no matter what his or her background is, one person, one vote, being all that matters, no matter whether he or she is a scholar or an ignorant person, the most or least learned—for you all that matters is one person, one vote.

This is absolutely wrong; logically it is incorrect. This theory and opinion runs counter to wisdom and to the knowledge of the learned and the scholars. In the name of equality, it equates a scholar with an ignorant person; it put the wise people on a level with the most common people.

How do you answer this question? What is your position on human justice and humanity dignity? How can you deprive the whole of mankind of their rights, by not electing the leader approved by society's scholars and thinkers? How can you give all that up along with Divine justice?

This is my objection to those who support ignorant broadmindedness. God, the Highest, has stated:, "Rise up and respond to them!" Far be it from you! How can you respond to it?

There have been great debates and discussions by different people, most of which are recorded in history and sociology books. Most of them explain the stories in a shocking way. An example is what the truthful Shi'a historian Abū al-Ḥasan Ali ibn al-Husayn ibn Ali Mas'ūdī (d. 346 A.H.) says in *Murūj al-Dhahab* (*Meadows of Gold*):

> One aspect of Mu'āwiyah's shrewdness and cleverness was to capture the hearts of those favored by him as well as the common people.

He adds,

> A Kufan was riding a camel into Damascus on his way back from fighting against Ali ibn Abī Ṭālib (as) at Ṣiffīn. Right then, a man stood in his way claiming: "This camel is mine. It was taken away from me at the Battle of Ṣiffīn."
>
> They both quarreled and were eventually taken to Mu'āwiyah; the Damascene called fifty of his men as witnesses, who all testified that the camel belonged to the Damascene claimant, so Mu'āwiyah ruled against the Kufan man, and he ordered that the camel be returned to the original owner.
>
> The Kufan said: "Mu'āwiyah, may God correct you! This camel of mine is male, not female; how come these fifty men testified that it is female and you accepted what they said?"
>
> Mu'āwiyah replied: "The judgment has already been passed down." Then, later on when those men had left them, Mu'āwiyah privately asked his camel's price.
>
> Mu'āwiyah paid the man double, showed him generosity, and said: "Take my message to Ali ibn Abī Ṭālib and tell him that I fought against him with a hundred thousand fighters, none of whom can tell a male camel from a female one!"
>
> The people's obedience to Mu'āwiyah was such that on their way to Ṣiffīn, they followed him in Friday prayers on a Wednesday! No one objected to him. The people of Damascus would give their lives for him. By offering their souls, they ensured his safety—they protected him at the expense of their souls.
>
> When 'Ammār, who was one of Ali's (as) companions, was killed by Mu'āwiyah's army, and the people of the Levant narrated that the Prophet (s) had said that he would be killed by a renegade faction, Mu'āwiyah's commander, 'Amr ibn al-'Āṣ, said: "It was Ali who killed 'Ammār ibn Yāsir, because he had called him out to help him. They all believed him,

thought what he had said was proof, and considered Ali and his followers to be the renegade faction.

The Levantines and Iraqis loved and adored Mu'āwiyah so much that they made cursing Ali a custom, which the young would grow up on and the old would die following.

Mas'ūdī says:

This example is enough to prove the ignorance of the Levantines, that is, some people asked a great leaned man of the Levant: "Who is Abū Turāb (Ali ibn Abī Ṭālib) whom Mu'āwiyah, the Leader and Imam of the Levant, always curses from atop the pulpit?"

The man replied: "I know that he is one of the seditious thieves."

Jāḥiẓ says: "I myself heard a man who was going on *ḥajj* say: 'If I go to God's House, then who is going to speak to me from inside the House?'"

Jāḥiẓ also says: "One of my friends told me: 'Once when I offered my blessing upon Mohammad, a common man heard it and asked me: "What is your opinion about this Muhammad? Is he our Creator?"'"

Thumāmah ibn Ashras says:

One day, when I was passing through the market in Baghdad I noticed a man lecturing, and some people were gathered around him listening.

I dismounted my mule, approached the people, and asked one of them what the gathering was about. In the meantime, I managed to get even closer, where I saw a man speaking highly about the collyrium he was selling, saying: "Whoever rubs a bit of that stuff on his eyes, his eyes will be cured of all diseases."

To my great surprise, when I caught sight of the man's eyes, I noticed that one of them was covered with tiny spots, and the other was quite defective.[71]

I asked: "O man! If this stuff of yours is as you claim and it cures all diseases, why do you not cure your own eyes first?"

To my question the man answered: "You ignorant man! Do you think that my eyes were damaged in your town, Baghdad, so as to be curable here?! My eyes were damaged when I was in Egypt!"

Almost all the crowd gathered there accepted the man's word, and then one of them turned to me saying: "Yes, he is right, his eyes were damaged in Egypt, so you're talking nonsense!"

Thumāmah says:

When I wanted to make them understand that the man was a swindler, because even if his eyes had been damaged in Egypt, the

stuff was in Baghdad, so he could cure them with it, they did not understand me. Contrary to what I said, they rose against me. Some of them took off their shoes and sandals and started hitting me on the head so hard that I could hardly rescue myself.

Mas'ūdī, after relating Jāḥiẓ's and Thumāmah's stories, says:

Some of my brothers have told me that one of the common people of Baghdad reported a neighbor of his for becoming an atheist, to some of the learned chiefs and the governor of the town.

The governor asked: "What religion does this man whom you are complaining about follow?"

The man answered: "He is a Murji'ite, fatalist, Nāṣibī Rāfiḍī."

The governor asked him why he had chosen such a religion.

The man answered: "Because he dislikes Mu'āwiyah, the son of Khaṭṭāb, who had a quarrel with Ali, the son of 'Ās."

The governor said: "O man! Your perfections are so high that I know not whether to be jealous of your knowledge, your way of speaking, or your breeding and background."

On another occasion Mas'ūdi says:

One of our brothers, who was a learned man, so related his story to me:

Our custom was that in our gathering, we used to speak about Abū Bakr, 'Umar, Ali, and Mu'āwiyah, and most of the time, the ordinary people used to join us and listen to what we were discussing.

Once one of them, who was the wisest and had the longest beard, told me: "How much you are talking about Abū Bakr, 'Umar, Ali and Mu'āwiyah, and So-and-So and So-and-So!"

I told him: "What do you have to say about them, and what is your opinion of them?"

He said: "Which of them do you mean?"

I said: "Ali ibn Abī Ṭālib, what is your opinion of him?"

He asked: "Is Ali not the father of Fāṭimah?"

I asked: "Who is Fāṭimah?"

He said: "Fāṭimah was the wife of the Prophet (s), the daughter of 'Ā'ishah, and Mu'āwiyah's sister."

I asked: "What was the story of Ali?"

He said: "He was killed when fighting along with the Prophet (s), at the battle of Hunayn."

After bringing up the story, Mas'ūdī relates the story of the Umayyads and [ʻAbdullāh] Saffāh:

In the time of Harūn al-Rashid, in Baghdad, one of the materialists who had knowledge of medicine began curing diseases and illnesses. He pretended to be the best physician and declared that he was a Sunni and belonged to the majority (*al-jamā'ah*); he therefore always cursed innovators. He was known as a hard-line Sunni among the common people who were obedient to him. Every day, a great many of them, each with a *qārūrah*[72] (urine specimen jar) in his hand, came to him to cure them.

When they were all present, the man would stand up and say:

> O ye Muslims, is it not you who say that there is no bringer of good or harm except God? So why have you come here to tell me about your harm or benefit? Go to your Creator and beseech Him for your need! And rely on your Lord to do as you say!

In the meantime, some of the patients turned to their companions saying: "Yes, by God, this man is quite right."

Then, some of then left him and did not consult him any more until they died of their illnesses, but others waited until he was quiet, and then showed him their urine specimen jars. After examining each jar, he would prescribe a certain medicine for each patient and tell him: "O man! You are weak in your belief; if it were not so, you would rely on your Creator, because God can cure you in the same way as He has made you sick."

In this manner, by dissuading patients from seeking medical treatment, he caused most of them die.

After telling this story, Mas'ūdī relates:

> People are usually used to giving authority and governorship to such people who do not know the rules and laws of the guardianship and authority; they treat those who are not great or superior as great or superior. They follow the unlearned; they follow someone who is expert only in one subject but who does not know about anything else around him, who cannot tell the learned from the most learned, let alone the worst from the best—they are unable to distinguish between wisdom and folly.

Therefore, righteous man, cast a glance at the assembly of the learned and see what kind of men of knowledge, greatness, and wisdom sit there, and in the meantime, see how the common people are unaware of them. They do not care to participate in those sessions. They are unwilling to be seen at such gatherings.

Open your eyes and consider well—the majority of the common people always chase after the bear on the leash to see if his owner makes

him dance, or chase after the baboon-man with a tambourine in hand, beating it to make the trained animal move from side to side as if dancing, or are keen on pleasures, going to a magician who falsely makes something out of nothing, with lie after lie, or listen to story-tellers, or stand in the middle of the road and watch a man being given a hundred lashes or more in the hope he will be corrected, or, even worse, wait for hours to witness a man being publicly hanged.

When they hear a null and void utterance, they follow it, but when they hear the truth they take no notice of it—they do not forsake the null and void. They do not consider an ugly affair to be so ugly or a decent affair to be righteous.

They are not afraid to call a righteous man corrupt and accuse him of being crooked or a believing man an unbeliever and brand him an infidel.

The Prophet has revealed this secret by saying:

النّاس اثنان: عالِمٌ و متعلِّمٌ، و ماعدا ذالِک همجٌ رعاعٌ لا یعبأ الله بهم.

There are two groups of people: the learned and the learners, and apart from that, nymphs of whom God takes no notice.

And similarly it is narrated that when the people asked Ali ibn Abī Ṭālib about the common people he said:

همجٌ رعاعٌ، أتباع کلّ ناطِقٍ، لم یستضیئوا بنورِ العِلم، ولم یلجئوا إلی رکنٍ وثیقٍ.

Nymphs, followers of every brayer, unilluminated by the light of knowledge—they have not sought the support of a safe corner.

Everyone without exception agrees that they should be called nymphs[73] because if they assemble to address a matter, they work on it without using their minds, and then when they leave it, they forget all about it—or are so lowly that they cannot even notice it and are unknown to society.

O man! Think well and ponder upon your deeds to see to your manners, and observe how different and contradictory your manners are! Therefore, cast your glance at the great and the wise and see how their greatness and nobility inspires awe in your hearts!

Be aware that the Prophet was sent by the Almighty and rose up, inviting the people to God for twenty-two years. God's revelations were being sent down to him; he was dictating them to the people and they were writing, recording, and preserving them word for word.

During that time, Mu'āwiyah's health was getting worse, God alone knows how bad. The Prophet wrote to him a few months before his death.

However, they exalted Mu'āwiyah's name and elevated his status to scribe of the Revelation. Then, because of his falsely given title, they continued revering and respecting him. They were not even content with their reverence for him until they had appointed him Recipient of Revelation. They severed their link with others, and banned themselves from mentioning anyone else's name but his; they completely wiped out remembrance of anyone else.

The reason for this is habit and familiarity, what they are born to, and what they grow up with. They are so used to it by the time they attain majority that they acknowledge and accept it as their inborn nature.

Poets have composed poems, and men of letters have made so many speeches about their customs and natures that an anonymous poet says:

لاتهنّي بعد إذ أكرمتني فشديدٌ عادةٌ متنزعة

After you have honored me and given respect to me, do not scorn me. A habit ripped away is difficult.

And, as a reproach, another poet has said to his friend:

ولكن فطم النفس أنقل محملاً من الصخرة الصماء حين ترومها

However, weaning the soul is more difficult than moving the heaviest rocks from their fixed places.

Arab philosophers say:

ألعادة أملك بالارب

Habit has the most power over desire.

Non-Arab philosophers say:

ألعادة هي الطبيعة الثانية

Habit is second nature.

Abū 'Iqāl, the writer, has written a book about common people's ethics: their morality, disposition, and discussions; he has mentioned them in detail and titled it *al-Mulhī*. If I did not hate prolixity and deviation from the brevity intended in this book, I would explain some

of the masses' gems and ethics, their nice, amazing deeds, and I would refer to people's levels of ethics and behavior in their lifestyles.[74]

In any case, we narrated this information from a famous historian and sociologist approved by both Shi'a and Sunnis so as to be a proof for both Shi'a and Sunnis for them to realize that the general public who live at this level of thought, imagination, and emotion cannot choose an Infallible Imam.

The soul of the Imam is at the pinnacle of truths, perceiving spiritual matters and recognizing right from wrong.

The Imam has a God-given ability to distinguish between what is correct and what is not. In fact, it is the highest level of distinction; that is, he has an ability to distinguish, and a psychic radar that never makes mistakes. He is never regretful of his deeds. It is stated:

أن تتقوا الله يجعل لكم فرقاناً.

...if you fear God, He will give you a criterion. (8:29)

He will give you the same criterion He gave to Moses.

وَلَقَدْ آتَيْنَا مُوسَى وَهَارُونَ الْفُرْقَانَ وَضِيَاءً وَذِكْرًا لِّلْمُتَّقِينَ.

And We verily gave Moses and Aaron the criterion and a light and a reminder for those who are God-fearing. (21:48)

وَإِذْ آتَيْنَا مُوسَى الْكِتَابَ وَالْفُرْقَانَ لَعَلَّكُمْ تَهْتَدُونَ.

...and when We gave Moses the Book and the criterion so that you might be guided. (2:53)

The Imam has such insight and light that he distinguishes bad from worse, the worthy from the unworthy, and right from wrong. He walks on the straight path and plans his own affair as well the affairs of his society using this insight and light.

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا اتَّقُوا اللَّهَ وَآمِنُوا بِرَسُولِهِ يُؤْتِكُمْ كِفْلَيْنِ مِن رَّحْمَتِهِ وَيَجْعَل لَّكُمْ نُورًا تَمْشُونَ بِهِ.

O you who believe! Fear God, and believe in His Messenger, and He will bestow on you a double portion of His Mercy: He will provide for you a Light by which you shall walk. (57:28)

It is quite clear that the Imam has the highest degree of illumination and no one can reach that status so as to be able to recognize the Imam and choose him as the Leader.

To conclude this lesson, we cite a superb *hadith* about the Imamate. It is taken from the spring of the guardianship and Imamate—Ali ibn Mūsā al-Riḍā.

The Narration of Imam Riḍā Concerning the Condition of the Imams

Blessed Muhammad ibn Yaʿqūb Kulaynī[75] relates from ʿAbd al-ʿAzīz ibn Muslim:

> We were in Merv along with Imam Riḍā (as) and on our arrival in Merv, I went to the mosque for Friday prayers.
>
> There were several groups sitting around, and each group was saying something different about the Imam's status. I sat close to one of the groups and listened to what they were talking about.
>
> A little later, I went to Imam Riḍā and reported to him what was going on among the people in the mosque.
>
> He smiled and said:
>
> > ʿAbd al-Azīz, those people are ignorant and they have been beguiled by their own thoughts and opinions. God, the Honorable and Exalted, did not take His Prophet until He had completed his religion and revealed the Qur'an to him in which there is *an exposition of everything* (16:89). He has explained in it what is lawful and unlawful, the punishments and laws, and everything people need; He, the Honorable and Exalted, states:
> >
> > مَّا فَرَّطْنَا فِي الْكِتَابِ مِن شَيْءٍ.
> >
> > *We have not neglected anything in the Book.* (6:38)
> >
> > During the Farewell Pilgrimage, at the end of his life, He revealed:
> >
> > الْيَوْمَ أَكْمَلْتُ لَكُمْ دِينَكُمْ وَأَتْمَمْتُ عَلَيْكُمْ نِعْمَتِي وَرَضِيتُ لَكُمُ الْإِسْلَامَ دِينًا.
> >
> > *This day have I perfected your religion for you and completed My favor unto you, and have chosen for you Islam as your religion.* (5:3)

The matter of the Imamate is part of the completion of the religion. The Prophet did not pass away until he had explained the religion to them in detail, and made it clear to them how to take the straight path. He showed them the right way and appointed Ali as their rightful guide and Imam, and made everything his nation needed crystal-clear. So

whoever thinks that God, the Honorable and Exalted, has not completed His religion is in fact rejecting God's Book, and whoever rejects God's Book surely does not believe in God. Moreover, do they know the status of the Imam and his position so as to be able to choose? It is stated:

إِنَّ الْإِمَامَةَ أَجَلُّ قَدْراً وَأَعْظَمُ شَأْناً وَأَعْلَى مَكَاناً وَأَمْنَعُ جَانِباً وَأَبْعَدُ غَوْراً مِنْ أَنْ يَبْلُغَهَا النَّاسُ بِعُقُولِهِمْ أَوْ يَنَالُوهَا بِآرَائِهِمْ أَوْ يُقِيمُوا إِمَاماً بِاخْتِيَارِهِ.

"The Imamate is too valuable, its affair to great, its position too high, too secure and too profound for people's minds to grasp it, or their opinions to reach it, or to establish an Imam of their choice!"

The Imamate is such a position that God, the Honorable and Exalted, gave Abraham the [level of] Friend after prophecy. Friendship is a third level and privilege He bestowed upon him and through which He celebrated him. He then said:

إِنِّي جَاعِلُكَ لِلنَّاسِ إِمَاماً.

Lo! I have appointed thee a leader for mankind. (2:24)

Delighted with that, Abraham asked:

وَمِنْ ذُرِّيَّتِي؟

And of my offspring?

Blessed and Transcendent God replied: *My covenant includeth not wrong-doers.*

Therefore, this verse negates the Imamate of any wrong-doers until the Day of Resurrection and restricts Guardianship and the Imamate to the infallible. Then, the Transcendent God honored him by placing the choice, pure people among his offspring, saying:

وَوَهَبْنَا لَهُ إِسْحَقَ وَيَعْقُوبَ نَافِلَةً وَكُلّاً جَعَلْنَا صَالِحِينَ وَجَعَلْنَاهُمْ أَئِمَّةً يَهْدُونَ بِأَمْرِنَا وَأَوْحَيْنَا إِلَيْهِمْ فِعْلَ الْخَيْرَاتِ وَإِقَامَ الصَّلَوةِ وَإِيتَاءَ الزَّكَاةِ وَكَانُوا لَنَا عَابِدِينَ.

And We bestowed upon him Isaac, and Jacob as a grandson. Each of them We made righteous. And We made them chiefs who guide by Our command, and We inspired in them the doing of good deeds and the right establishment of worship and the giving of alms, and they were worshippers of Us (alone). (21:72–73)

Thus, year in and year out and century after century, the Imamate was always among the offspring of Abraham until the Transcendent God had the Prophet inherit it. He, Mighty and Transcendent is He, then said:

إِنَّ أَوْلَى النَّاسِ بِإِبْرَاهِيمَ لَلَّذِينَ اتَّبَعُوهُ وَهَذَا النَّبِيُّ وَالَّذِينَ آمَنُوا وَاللَّهُ وَلِيُّ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ

Most surely the nearest of people to Abraham are those who followed him and this Prophet and those who believe, and God is the guardian of the believers. (3:68)

So it was his alone. He then charged Ali with it by the Transcendent God's Command, in accordance with the obligation imposed by God. It then passed to his pure offspring, whom God gave knowledge and belief, as Transcendent God says:

وَقَالَ الَّذِينَ أُوتُوا الْعِلْمَ وَالْإِيمَانَ لَقَدْ لَبِثْتُمْ فِي كِتَابِ اللَّهِ إِلَىٰ يَوْمِ الْبَعْثِ فَهَٰذَا يَوْمُ الْبَعْثِ

But those to whom knowledge and faith are given will say: The truth is, ye have tarried, by God's decree, until the Day of Resurrection. (3:56)

Thus, it is exclusive to Ali's offspring until the Day of Resurrection—because there is no Prophet after Mohammad—so, how can these ignorant people choose the Imam?

In fact, the Imamate is at the position of the Prophets and the inheritance of the executors. The Imamate is God's caliphate, the Master of the Faithful's station, and Hasan and Husayn's inheritance. The Imamate is the reins of the religion, order for the Muslims, soundness for the world, and strength for the faithful. The Imamate is Islam's ever-living basis and lofty branch.

The perfection of prayer, charity, fasting, pilgrimage, and *jihād* is through the Imam, as is sharing out booty, supererogatory donations, implementation of punishments and laws, and defense of the borders and coasts.

The Imam makes what God makes lawful, lawful, and what God makes unlawful, unlawful. He administers God's punishments, and defends God's religion, and with wisdom, good exhortation, and a plethora of proof calls to the path of his Lord. The Imam is like the rising sun, which lights up the world with its radiance on the horizon, such that hands and eyes cannot reach him. The Imam is the shining moon and glowing lamp, the brilliant light and the guiding star in the pitch darkness, wandering the lands and the desert, and the depths of the seas. The Imam is sweet water for the thirsty, the guide to guidance, and the savior from vileness. The Imam is the fire of a lighthouse, heat for

those who want to keep warm, and a beacon in perils. Whoever separates from him is doomed. The Imam is the rain-bearing cloud, the pouring rain, the shining sun, the cloudy sky, the flatland, the abundant spring, the pond, and the meadow.

The Imam is the sympathetic friend, the kind father, the full sibling, the kind mother to the small child, and a shelter for creatures in disastrous conditions. The Imam is God's trustee to His creatures, God's proof against His servants, and His caliph in His lands, the inviter to God and defender of what God holds sacred. The Imam is free of sins and without fault, endowed with knowledge, branded with tolerance and order for the religion; he is strength for the Muslims, anger towards the hypocrites, and slayer of the unbelievers. The Imam is unique in his time, no one coming close to him, and unequalled by any scholar. There is no substitute for him, no one equal to or like him; he is endowed with all virtue without seeking or acquiring it. Rather it is bestowal by the Conferrer, the Oft-Giving. Therefore, who is it who reaches the knowledge of the Imam, or can choose him? Far be it! Far be it!

Intellects have gotten lost, wisdoms have strayed, minds have become perplexed, eyes have become dull. The great have been humbled, the wise are in awe, the tolerant have lost patience, orators have become speechless, the intelligent have become ignorant, poets are dumbstruck, authors are powerless, and rhetoricians are wordless to describe any aspect of his status, any of his virtues. They have confessed to inability and shortcoming.

How can he be fully described, his essence be captured, or any of his affairs be comprehend, or someone be found to take his place and he be dispensed of? No, never! He is as unreachable as a star is to those who try to reach it, and beyond description by describers. How can people reach the high sky to see him and describe his characteristics and nature? In this situation, how can people choose the Imam, how can wisdoms realize this fact, and where can they find any person like the Imam?

Where is choice compared to that? Where are minds compared to that? Where can the like of that be found? Do you think that that can be found anywhere but in Mohammad the Messenger's family? By God, they are beguiled by their souls, and falsehoods have given them false hope; therefore, they have climbed an untenable, difficult ladder from which their feet will slip to the foot of the mountain! They wanted to establish the Imam with defective, fruitless, confused minds and misleading opinions, but they only fell further away.

قَاتَلَهُمُ اللهُ أَنَّى يُؤْفَكُونَ.

May God fight them. How perverse they are! (9:30)

They wanted something difficult, spoke nonsense, strayed far and fell into confusion, for they knowingly forsook the Imam.

وَزَيَّنَ لَهُمُ الشَّيْطَانُ أَعْمَالَهُمْ فَصَدَّهُمْ عَنِ السَّبِيلِ وَكَانُوا مُسْتَبْصِرِينَ.

...and Satan made their deeds seem fair to them and kept them back from the path though they were keen observers. (29:38)

They have turned away from God's choice and the Messenger and the people of his Household's choice towards their own choice, though the Qur'an calls to them:

وَرَبُّكَ يَخْلُقُ مَا يَشَاءُ وَيَخْتَارُ مَا كَانَ لَهُمُ الْخِيَرَةُ سُبْحَانَ اللهِ وَتَعَالَى عَمَّا يُشْرِكُونَ.

Your Lord creates whatever He wills and chooses. They have no choice. All praise belongs to God; He is exalted over whatever they may associate. (28:68)

It states:

وَمَا كَانَ لِمُؤْمِنٍ وَلَا مُؤْمِنَةٍ إِذَا قَضَى اللهُ وَرَسُولُهُ أَمْرًا أَنْ يَكُونَ لَهُمُ الْخِيَرَةُ مِنْ أَمْرِهِمْ.

And it becomes not a believing man or a believing woman, when God and His Messenger have decided an affair, that they should claim any say in their affair. (33:36)

And it is states:

مَا لَكُمْ كَيْفَ تَحْكُمُونَ - أَمْ لَكُمْ كِتَابٌ فِيهِ تَدْرُسُونَ - إِنَّ لَكُمْ فِيهِ لَمَا تَخَيَّرُونَ - أَمْ لَكُمْ أَيْمَانٌ عَلَيْنَا بَالِغَةٌ إِلَى يَوْمِ الْقِيَامَةِ إِنَّ لَكُمْ لَمَا تَحْكُمُونَ - سَلْهُمْ أَيُّهُمْ بِذَلِكَ زَعِيمٌ - أَمْ لَهُمْ شُرَكَاءُ فَلْيَأْتُوا بِشُرَكَائِهِمْ إِنْ كَانُوا صَادِقِينَ.

What is wrong with you? How do you judge? Or do you have a book which you study, that you shall indeed have all that you choose?

Or do you have pledges binding on Us, reaching the Day of Resurrection, that yours shall be all that you ordain?

Ask them which of them guarantees that!

Or have they any partners? Then let them bring forth their partners if they are truthful! (68:36–41)

He says, Mighty and Sublime is He:

أَفَلَا يَتَدَبَّرُونَ الْقُرْآنَ أَمْ عَلَى قُلُوبٍ أَقْفَالُهَا.

Do they not ponder on the Qur'an; or are there locks on their hearts? (47:24)

Or:

طُبِعَ عَلَى قُلُوبِهِمْ فَهُمْ لَا يَفْقَهُونَ.

...their hearts are sealed so they do not understand. (9:87)

Or:

قَالُوا سَمِعْنَا وَهُمْ لَا يَسْمَعُونَ

إِنَّ شَرَّ الدَّوَابِّ عِندَ اللَّهِ الصُّمُّ الْبُكْمُ الَّذِينَ لَا يَعْقِلُونَ

وَلَوْ عَلِمَ اللَّهُ فِيهِمْ خَيْرًا لَّأَسْمَعَهُمْ وَلَوْ أَسْمَعَهُمْ لَتَوَلَّوا وَّهُم مُّعْرِضُونَ.

...who say, "We heard," but listen not.

Surely the worst of beasts, in God's sight, are the deaf and dumb who reason not.

Had God known of any good in them, He would have made them hear, but had He made them hear, they would have turned away averse. (6:21–23)

Or:

قَالُوا سَمِعْنَا وَعَصَيْنَا.

...they said: We hear and disobey. (2:93)

However, it is *God's bounty, which He bestows upon whom He pleases and God has great bounty* (57:21). Then how can they have the choice of Imam when the Imam knows and is not ignorant, is a shepherd who does not shirk, is a spring of holiness and purity, piety, asceticism, knowledge, and worship? He alone is the answer to the Messenger's prayer, the pure progeny of one exclusively devoted [to God] (*al-batūl*); there is no doubt in his lineage, and no one of lineage comes close to his clan—of Quraysh, and the cream of Hāshim and the offspring of the Messenger; God's pleasure, Mighty and Sublime is He, noblest of all nobles, the branch of 'Abd Manāf; growing knowledge, perfect tolerance, proficient in leadership, knowledgeable in politics. Obedience to him is mandatory. He is the executor of God's command, Mighty and Sublime is He, the counsellor to God's servants, the protector of God's religion.

God, the most High, has conferred blessing on the Messengers and Imams, and provided them natures not previously given to anyone else; therefore, out of all the creatures of the world, their knowledge is the best and highest. God states:

أَفَمَن يَهْدِي إِلَى الْحَقِّ أَحَقُّ أَن يُتَّبَعَ أَمَّن لَّا يَهِدِّي إِلَّا أَن يُهْدَىٰ فَمَا لَكُمْ كَيْفَ تَحْكُمُونَ.

...so is someone who guides to the Truth worthier of being followed or someone who does not guide unless he himself is guided? What is the matter with you? How do you judge? (10:35)

He also states:

وَمَن يُؤْتَ الْحِكْمَةَ فَقَدْ أُوتِيَ خَيْرًا كَثِيرًا.

...and whoever is given wisdom has been given an abundant boon. (2:269)

And concerning Saul He states:

إِنَّ اللَّهَ اصْطَفَاهُ عَلَيْكُمْ وَزَادَهُ بَسْطَةً فِي الْعِلْمِ وَالْجِسْمِ وَاللَّهُ يُؤْتِي مُلْكَهُ مَن يَشَاءُ وَاللَّهُ وَاسِعٌ عَلِيمٌ.

Lo! God has chosen him above you, and has increased him abundantly in wisdom and physique. God bestows His Sovereignty on whom He pleases. God is All-Embracing, All-Knowing. (2:247)

And to His Messenger He has stated:

وَأَنزَلَ اللَّهُ عَلَيْكَ الْكِتَابَ وَالْحِكْمَةَ وَعَلَّمَكَ مَا لَمْ تَكُن تَعْلَمُ وَكَانَ فَضْلُ اللَّهِ عَلَيْكَ عَظِيمًا.

...and God revealed the Book and Wisdom to you and taught you what you did not know; thus, the Grace of God is great to you. (4:113)

He has also stated about the Imams from his progeny, his Household, and kinfolks:

أَمْ يَحْسُدُونَ النَّاسَ عَلَىٰ مَا آتَاهُمُ اللَّهُ مِن فَضْلِهِ فَقَدْ آتَيْنَا آلَ إِبْرَاهِيمَ الْكِتَابَ وَالْحِكْمَةَ وَآتَيْنَاهُم مُّلْكًا عَظِيمًا فَمِنْهُم مَّنْ آمَنَ بِهِ وَمِنْهُم مَّن صَدَّ عَنْهُ وَكَفَىٰ بِجَهَنَّمَ سَعِيرًا.

Or do they envy the people for what God has given them of His grace? But indeed We have given to Abraham's children the Book and the wisdom, and We

have given them a grand kingdom. So of them is he who believes in him, and of them is he who turns away from him, and Hell is sufficient to burn. (4:54–55).

When God, the most High, bestows the guardianship and authority over His creatures upon one of His obedient worshippers, He expands his breast to bear the heavy tasks he is being entrusted with. He stores up the main sources of wisdom in his heart, and constantly inspires him with inspiration so he will never again tire of answering or deviate from what is correct. Thus, he is infallible, supported, granted success, and protected. God, the most High, confers this rank and position on him so that he will be a sign and proof from God over His creatures; as He states:

ذَٰلِكَ فَضْلُ اللَّهِ يُؤْتِيهِ مَن يَشَاءُ وَاللَّهُ ذُو الْفَضْلِ الْعَظِيمِ.

...such is the grace of God that He grants it to anyone He pleases, for God has great bounty. (62:4)

Is anyone able to do the same and choose him? Or does their choice have these attributes such that they can present him?

I swear by the House of God that they have transgressed against the truth and cast God's Book behind their backs as if they do not know. There is guidance and healing in God's Book, but they discarded it and followed their desires, so God has criticized them, made them hateful and condemned them.

He, Transcendent and Sublime is He, says:

وَمَنْ أَضَلُّ مِمَّنِ اتَّبَعَ هَوَاهُ بِغَيْرِ هُدًى مِّنَ اللَّهِ إِنَّ اللَّهَ لَا يَهْدِي الْقَوْمَ الظَّالِمِينَ.

...and who is further astray than one who follows his own desire without guidance from God? Surely God does not guide the unjust people. (28:50)

He says:

فَتَعْسًا لَّهُمْ وَأَضَلَّ أَعْمَالَهُمْ

...perdition is for them, and He will make their actions vain (47:8)

and says:

كَبُرَ مَقْتًا عِندَ اللَّهِ وَعِندَ الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا كَذَٰلِكَ يَطْبَعُ اللَّهُ عَلَىٰ كُلِّ قَلْبِ مُتَكَبِّرٍ جَبَّارٍ.

...it is greatly hateful in the sight of God and in the sight of those who believe. Thus does God print on every arrogant, disdainful heart. (40:35)

In any event, because this narration springs from the gushing font of Guardianship and the Imamate, and was uttered by His Holiness the eighth Imam, every word of it is considered a pearl in the endless ocean. Every word of it should be pondered over for months to comprehend its meaning. Seeking understanding of it and comprehension of its truths comes from God. We cited it in its entirety to illuminate minds, gladden hearts and make eyes light up.

We ultimately conclude that it is absolutely impossible for man to appoint the Imam because his wisdom is limited and that makes him unable—so he cannot reach the lofty status of the Imam.

Some people say:[76]

> Just as there is probability of error in a *khabar wāḥid* but none in a *mutawātir* narration—a *mutawātir* narration is incontrovertible—the same applies to choosing the Imam. A single person is expected to choose wrongly, but the greater the number of people involved in the choice, the lower the probability is of making a mistake. The probability decreases and gradually disappears if the number of those involved in politics arriving at a consensus is large enough, and the result of the vote is infallible.

It is clear from our discussion thus far that the claim is invalid. *Mutawātir* narrations do not help us here, because they are conditional upon direct evidence. That is because there is a probability of error in each individual's testimony. Certainty of the truth of the testimony is generated by a large number of witnesses who cannot all be colluding. However, if their testimony is based on rational inferences and conjecture, it will never generate certainty. Generally the term *mutawātir* narration does not apply to such matters. The same applies to selecting the Imam, because it is not possible for people who cannot comprehend the Imam's virtues, aptitudes, hidden secret psychological traits, spiritual qualities, and levels of closeness to the realms of Monotheism—irrespective of whether it is one person or a hundred, because they are all on the same level. Those aptitudes and virtues will never be revealed through their consensus or vote. That is why it is impossible for them to choose and why their choice would never generate infallibility or freedom from error.

Lesson Twenty:
The Imam Must Be the Most Virtuous and Have Authority over the Nation

LESSON TWENTY

In the Name of God, the Merciful, the Compassionate
On the infallibility of the Prophets and the Imams, peace be upon them
And blessing upon Mohammad and his pure Family, and God's curse
on their enemies from now until the Day of Resurrection! There is no
power or strength except through the Lofty, Glorious God.

The Wise God states in His Glorious Book:

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا أَطِيعُوا اللَّهَ وَأَطِيعُوا الرَّسُولَ وَأُولِي الْأَمْرِ مِنكُمْ فَإِن تَنَازَعْتُمْ فِي شَيْءٍ فَرُدُّوهُ إِلَى اللَّهِ وَالرَّسُولِ إِن كُنتُمْ تُؤْمِنُونَ بِاللَّهِ وَالْيَوْمِ الْآخِرِ ذَٰلِكَ خَيْرٌ وَأَحْسَنُ تَأْوِيلًا.

O you who believe! Obey God, and obey the Messenger and those of you who are in authority; and if you have a dispute concerning any matter, refer it to God and the Messenger if you are (in truth) believers in God and the Last Day. That is better and more seemly in the end. (4:59)

What can be understood about the Imamate from the perspective of reason and religious law is that the Imamate, like prophecy, is a divinely appointed position based on God's grace to His servants. However, the Messenger's function is to legislate rules and laws via Divine revelation, whereas the caliph's function is to communicate the laws, explain etiquette and practices, clarify ambiguities, explain problems, apply the verses and statements to instances and objects, and fight over the interpretation, as the Messenger fought over the Revelation. Similarly it is to clarify some of the particulars of the laws that circumstances did not allow God's Messenger to explain during his lifetime for whatever reason, or because the circumstances had not arisen or the subject matter did not yet exist, or because people were not ready to accept it. Just as the Book was gradually revealed to the people and the rules and laws reached them little by little for whatever reason, so too did the secondary rulings, the particulars of the subject matter, clarification of facts, and interpretation of the Qur'an all have to be explained to them gradually—this is what the caliph or Imam does.

The Need for the Infallible Imam to Be Appointed in Accordance with the Rule of Divine Grace

For the same reason that Divine Grace instructed the Messengers to teach the creatures to obey God and refrain from committing sins, and

lead them to the straight path to get closer to God, to teach them how to worship Him, and teach them what they did not previously know—because He had not created them as animals to sit idle, eat, and rest, but to search for His way—He made the path towards Him easy to reach. By sending His Book and Messengers, and gradually sending down the Divine revelations, He completed His proof for the creatures, and, through the intermediary of the Messengers, led them to the blissful destination. For the same reason, Divine Grace dictates that the religion should, after the Prophets, have Imams most virtuous, most familiar with and most learned in the truths of the religion to guide people to the straight path. There must be such an Imam to pass on any laws not passed on in the Prophet's lifetime for whatever reason. He must convey the message of the Prophet to those not privileged by seeing and benefiting from the Messenger and lead them to the path of guidance. It is not conceivable that God would neglect the nation, leaving them without anyone to manage their affairs, when everyone has an equal need for someone to cultivate and teach them, and the rule of Divine Grace applies to them all equally.

Therefore, the Blessed and Transcendent God has to send someone to steer souls towards perfection, complete the code of religious law (*sharī'ah*) by explaining it, dispel doubts caused by atheists, illuminate the world of ignorance with the light of knowledge, clarify religious knowledge and secrets for people who are ready, hold back the enemies of religion with the force of weaponry, straighten out crookedness with his hand and his tongue, remove defects, and fill gaps.

As there has always been a long span between the appearances of two Messengers, and there is no Messenger or new law after Mohammad, the Seal of the Messengers, an Imam is necessary after the Prophet to guide and lead the people. Because God has taken it upon Himself to favor His servants with His hidden Grace, take subtle care of them, and guide them and be kind to them, and wants nothing but the best for them and their happiness, He must not leave His Prophet's religion incomplete through [the Prophet's] death. He is only continuing to care for the religion by appointing the Imam, the heavy burden of which He alone can bear, [the Imam's being] the most perfect specimen and closest thing to the Prophet in all attributes; he it is who leads people towards perfection. Part of this logic is the Prophet's duty to designate an executor. That is why God, through the intermediary of the Prophet, nominated Ali ibn Abī Ṭālib as executor over the entire nation. In addition to his twenty-three years of advice and recommendation of Ali as his inheritor and caliph—both in Mecca and Medina—close to his demise, on the way back from the Farewell

Pilgrimage, he presented Ali as his successor to more than a hundred thousand pilgrims who were with him.

However, when the Prophet passed away, some people, who pretended to care about Islam, rose up under the Banī Sā'idah's Saqīfah against the Prophet's clear instruction, and, ignoring his rightful successor, invited the people to pledge allegiance to them. In this way, they did what they wanted to. Later on, however, when they climbed the pulpit of the Prophet, they could not answer the people's questions or solve their problems. They were unable to help the people. Time and again they turned to Ali, the Master of the Masters, for his help. Therefore, Sunni scholars and their followers took the position that the Imam did not have to be the best. Someone else could be Imam even if the best was available, and the Imam did not have to be chosen by God.

They said the choice of Imam was up to the people—they could choose anyone they wanted.

Whenever their error is pointed out to them, and the verses of the Qur'an or the *hadiths* in their own books are read to them, they have no recourse but to say: "As the utterances of the predecessors were more correct, we have no right to interfere—no matter who did it and no matter what was done." They are saying:

إِنَّا وَجَدْنَا آبَاءَنَا عَلَىٰ أُمَّةٍ وَإِنَّا عَلَىٰ آثَارِهِم مُّقْتَدُونَ.

Lo! We found our fathers following a religion, and we are following their footprints. (43:23)

The Sunnis' Excuse for not Criticizing the Behavior of the Companions is Like the Pagans' Excuse

This kind of excuse is similar to the pagans' response to the clear reasoning and bright verses that God's Messenger used to recite to them. When he did try to dissuade them from disbelieving and advise and instruct them to obey the Only God, they still kept saying:

إِنَّا وَجَدْنَا آبَاءَنَا عَلَىٰ أُمَّةٍ وَإِنَّا عَلَىٰ آثَارِهِم مُّهْتَدُونَ.

Lo! We found our fathers following a religion, and we are following their footprints. (43:23)

When they were told to follow God's commands, they would say: "We will never give up the customs and traditions of our ancestors."

وَإِذَا قِيلَ لَهُمُ اتَّبِعُوا مَا أَنزَلَ اللَّهُ قَالُوا بَلْ نَتَّبِعُ مَا أَلْفَيْنَا عَلَيْهِ آبَاءَنَا أَوَلَوْ كَانَ آبَاؤُهُمْ لَا يَعْقِلُونَ شَيْئًا وَلَا يَهْتَدُونَ.

And when it is said unto them: Follow that which God has revealed, they say: We follow that wherein we found our fathers. What! Even though their fathers were wholly unintelligent and had no guidance? (2:170)

Therefore, we say this to the Sunnis: Tell us which is more important: the religion and instructions of the Book of God or the actions of the Companions? All their actions and behavior must be considered to see if they are in accordance with the rules and the Book—their bad actions must be considered bad and their good deeds good.

However, if we take everything the Companions did as authoritative and treat it the same as the Book of God and the Prophet's practice, then we will come up with a new religion—a mixture of the Companions' practice and God's Messenger's. Of course this religion will not be a Divine religion, because we will have to repeal some of the Sunnah or some of the Book and put it aside, because the Companions' actions are authoritative, and abandon them when they conflict with the Companions' practice!

The Sunnis have done the same as the pagans—followed their own ancestors and the Prophet's Companions; in this way, they have walked away from the explicit verses of the Qur'an and Ali's immediate succession. They give excuses that defy logic:

وَإِذَا قِيلَ لَهُمْ تَعَالَوْا إِلَىٰ مَا أَنزَلَ اللَّهُ وَإِلَى الرَّسُولِ قَالُوا حَسْبُنَا مَا وَجَدْنَا عَلَيْهِ آبَاءَنَا أَوَلَوْ كَانَ آبَاؤُهُمْ لَا يَعْلَمُونَ شَيْئًا وَلَا يَهْتَدُونَ.

And when it is said unto them: "Come unto that which God has revealed and unto the Messenger," they say: "Enough for us is that wherein we found our fathers." What! Even though their fathers had no knowledge whatsoever, and no guidance? (5:104)

The clause *and when it is said to them: "Come unto that which God has revealed and unto the Messenger"* is the main basis of belief and practice that says: "Let us add nothing to our beliefs and avoid anything worthless in the religion." The only criterion is what is right, not the Companions' practices. When they are told that the only criterion is God's words and the Prophet's practices, and not fallible people's actions, they say: "The traditions of our predecessors and our grandfathers suffice for us." In response to their invalid argument, God says: *What! Even though their fathers had no knowledge whatsoever, and no guidance?* Many opine and write:

> Why should we, a thousand years, later scrutinize the Companions' words and actions, criticize and blame them, measure their words and deeds against the Qur'an and narrations on the authority of the Noble Messenger, level accusations against some of them and question their honesty and reliability? The time for these disputes has passed, so what use are they, whether good or bad, or true or not? Nowadays, our time is too short to dispute such matters. Besides, these disputes stir up sectarianism and disagreement.

However, with a little consideration it becomes clear that these objections are not out of place, because considering the Companions' practice is not to find faults with them and make their followers angry, but rather our inquiry is to ensure our belief and practice is as correct as possible. We must sit with our Sunni brothers as brothers, putting aside our ignorant prejudices and discussing these subjects clearly so as to make clear which of our arguments are correct and which—God forbid—are not. That is the wisest way, so as not to waste our precious lives on insignificant things. If we do not know who the Companions are, what they practiced, or their level of belief, but still follow them for years, doing whatever they did or commanded us to do, is our approach still correct? Our discussion is never whether they were good or bad; the Master of the Faithful said:

The reckoning is up to God.[77]

والحساب على الله.

Our dispute is because our practice conflicts with theirs. We just want to be Muslims in accordance with our belief, and make the truth the criterion on which our actions are based, on the basis of the Master of the Messengers' code of religious law (*sharī'ah*). We just see that what is practiced is the opposite. This is because of running after people whose action does not conform to the Book and Sunnah. We are endeavoring to devote our religion sincerely to God; as is stated:

وَمَا أُمِرُوا إِلَّا لِيَعْبُدُوا اللَّهَ مُخْلِصِينَ لَهُ الدِّينَ.

And they are ordered naught else than to serve God, sincerely devoting their religion to Him. (98:5)

...and not to be impure, for this would be the severest disaster:

فهذه هي المصيبة العظمى.

Then, according to this verse, we are afraid to be involved:

وَإِنَّ كَثِيرًا لَّيُضِلُّونَ بِأَهْوَائِهِم بِغَيْرِ عِلْمٍ.

But lo! Many mislead by their desires without any knowledge. (6:119)

We also fear being like those referred to in this verse:

أَفَرَأَيْتَ مَنِ اتَّخَذَ إِلَٰهَهُ هَوَاهُ وَأَضَلَّهُ اللَّهُ عَلَىٰ عِلْمٍ وَخَتَمَ عَلَىٰ سَمْعِهِ وَقَلْبِهِ وَجَعَلَ عَلَىٰ بَصَرِهِ غِشَاوَةً فَمَن يَهْدِيهِ مِن بَعْدِ اللَّهِ أَفَلَا تَذَكَّرُونَ.

Have you seen him who makes his desire his god, and God sends him astray purposely, and seals up his hearing and his heart, and sets on his sight a covering? Then who will lead him after God? Will you not then heed? (45:23)

We are afraid to attribute a lie to God and transgress the bounds; as is stated:

وَمَنْ أَظْلَمُ مِمَّنِ افْتَرَىٰ عَلَى اللَّهِ الْكَذِبَ وَهُوَ يُدْعَىٰ إِلَى الْإِسْلَامِ وَاللَّهُ لَا يَهْدِي الْقَوْمَ الظَّالِمِينَ.

And who does greater wrong than he who invents a lie against God when he is summoned unto Islam? And God guides not wrongdoing people. (61:7)

We want not only ourselves but all Muslims, as well as the entire world, to follow the correct religion, which is pure and free of all flaws of superstition and tribal and racial prejudice that have attached to it over time; for, as is stated:

أَفَمَن كَانَ عَلَىٰ بَيِّنَةٍ مِّن رَّبِّهِ كَمَن زُيِّنَ لَهُ سُوءُ عَمَلِهِ وَاتَّبَعُوا أَهْوَاءَهُمْ.

Is he who relies on a clear proof from his Lord like those for whom the evil that they do is beautified while they follow their own lusts? (47:14)

And above all, Islam is a religion of wisdom, knowledge and insight; it is the religion of thoughts, reflection, and accuracy. For this reason, we must have enough knowledge of the Prophet's and the Infallible Imams' nature and attributes. Apart from these, we must be fully acquainted with the Companions' method and way of thinking—not stick to our suspicion and conjectures; as is stated:

وَلَا تَقْفُ مَا لَيْسَ لَكَ بِهِ عِلْمٌ إِنَّ السَّمْعَ وَالْبَصَرَ وَالْفُؤَادَ كُلُّ أُولَٰئِكَ كَانَ عَنْهُ مَسْئُولًا.

Follow not that whereof thou hast no knowledge. Lo! The hearing and the sight and the heart—of each of these it will be asked. (17:36)

وَإِنَّ الظَّنَّ لَا يُغْنِي مِنَ الْحَقِّ شَيْئًا.

...and lo! A guess can never take the place of the truth. (53:28)

بَلِ اتَّبَعَ الَّذِينَ ظَلَمُوا أَهْوَاءَهُم بِغَيْرِ عِلْمٍ فَمَن يَهْدِي مَنْ أَضَلَّ اللَّهُ وَمَا لَهُم مِّن نَّاصِرِينَ.

Nay, but those who do wrong follow their own lusts without knowledge. Who is able to guide him whom God has sent astray? For such there are no helpers. (30:29)

The Sunni scholars say that as the responsibility of the caliph is only to manage social affairs and look after the nation, it is not necessary for an Imam to be infallible and virtuous. They say that the task of a caliph is only to administer punishments: chopping off thieves' hands, executing murderers, maintaining security, collecting welfare taxes, protecting the borders of the country, equipping the army, repelling the oppressors, sharing the spoils among the Muslims, and sending the Muslims on *ḥajj* and into *jihād*.

They say:

> One needs no superiority to handle these affairs; they can be carried out by any ordinary person who is more competent and capable and acts more correctly than anyone else. Therefore, the nation must set aside the most superior and appoint a less superior in his place as caliph.

They say:

> The next caliph is appointed by the previous one or chosen by those involved in politics, as in the case of Abū Bakr, who passed the caliphate on to 'Umar, or like the allegiance the Muslims pledged to the next caliphs. There is no need for all those involved in politics to pay allegiance. One, two, or at most five of them suffice. It is because on the Day of the Saqīfah, one, or two, or at most five voted for Abū Bakr; they were 'Umar, Abū 'Ubaydah ibn al-Jarrāḥ, Usayd ibn Ḥuḍayr, Bashīr ibn Sa'd, and Sālim—Abū Ḥudhayfah's freeman.

Māwardī says:

> Sunni scholars disagree over the number needed to appoint a caliph. Some say that it is only valid if there is a majority approval by those involved in politics in every town, so that everyone can be satisfied with him and the surrender to his leadership can be by consensus.

This claim is refuted by the allegiance pledged to Abū Bakr as caliph as agreed to by those present; they did not wait for those who were absent.

However, those who say the pledge of allegiance only requires five persons reason that there were five people present apart from Abū Bakr. Another reason is that 'Umar divided the council into six, for five to vote for the sixth. Others say that a pledge of allegiance by two people suffices to appoint a caliph—here, the two stand as witnesses—like at a wedding ceremony with a guardian and two witnesses. Others say that a pledge of allegiance by one person is enough, because when the Prophet was breathing his last breaths, 'Abbās told Ali ibn Abī Ṭālib:

امدد یدک ابایعک فیقول الناس عمّ رسولِ اللهِ بایع ابن عمّهِ فلا یختلف علیک اثنانِ.

Put your hand out and I will pledge allegiance to you. The people will then say: 'The Prophet's uncle has pledged allegiance to God's Messenger's cousin,' and no two people will ever oppose you.

An Explicit Statement by the Sunnis That the Imam Does Not Have to Be Infallible.[78]

Another explanation is that "allegiance" is a *ḥukm*, and a single person's *ḥukm* is binding on everyone else.

The Imams of both holy mosques, Juwaynī in *al-Irshād*, Imam ibn al-'Arabī al-Mālikī in *Sharḥ Saḥīḥ al-Būkhāri*, Qurṭubī in his exegesis, Imam Abū al-Mu'ālī, and some others agree that a pledge of allegiance by a single person involved in politics suffices.[79] Even Taftāzānī in *Sharḥ al-Maqāṣid* says: "When a leader dies, and someone who fulfills the criteria steps up as leader without being pledged allegiance to or nominated, and the people overwhelmingly support him, he is appointed as caliph." He goes further and says: "This is most likely correct even if he is sinful and ignorant, unless he makes people sin through what he does. Obedience to the leader is incumbent, provided he does not breach the rule of religious law, no matter whether he is just or unjust."[80]

However, the caliph does have to come from the Quraysh, be able to judge, be aware of his army and the rules of fighting, secure the borders of the country, and take revenge on the enemy, and he must not be overcome with compassion when administering punishments, being not anxious in killing or giving lashes. He does not need to be the best in his nation, and if need be, a lesser man can be chosen as caliph. Nor is it necessary for him to be infallible or to know secrets or the Unseen. He does not have to be the most intelligent or the bravest—or to be from the Banī Hāshim.

With regard to knowledge, the Imam is equal to the nation; there is no need for him to be more knowledgeable. Then, when they are asked:

"Who should people refer to in difficulties?" they say: "The Imam does not have to answer the individual's question." That is, the Imam's only responsibility is to govern the aforementioned social affairs.

The majority opinion of Sunni scholars is that: "An Imam should not lapse through debauchery or financial wrongdoing, lashing innocent people for no reason, unlawfully taking lives, breaching people's rights, doing away with punishments, or other unlawful conduct." They claim that such a leader is still caliph and must be obeyed. It is unlawful to rebel against him—it is only permissible to inform him of his shortcomings. Obedience to the caliph is incumbent even if he takes away a person's property or lashes an innocent person. It is because it is narrated on the authority of the Prophet and the Companions:

أسمعوا واطيعوا ولو لعبدٍ اجدع، ولو لعبدٍ حبشيٍّ، وصلّوا وراء كلِّ برٍّ وفاجرٍ. وروي انّه قال: اطِعهم وإن أكلوا مالك وضربوا ظهرك واطيعوهم ما اقاموا الصلاة.

> Listen to and obey, even [if your Leader is] a tortured slave, or he is an Abyssinian slave; follow any righteous or sinful person in prayer. It is narrated that the Prophet said: "Obey them even if they usurp your properties and beat your back and follow them whenever they establish prayer."

Everything cited thus far is on the authority of Abū Bakr Bāqillānī, the author of *Tamhīd al-Qawā'id*, who cites these things among the principles (*uṣūl*), which is in accordance with Sunni opinion.[81]

Fabricated Narrations on the Duty to Obey Tyrannical Rulers

As alluded to by Abū Bakr Bāqillānī, Sunnis rely on many narrations as evidence of the duty to obey tyrannical rulers. We are therefore going to cite some of them for you.

'Allāmah Amīnī says in *al-Ghadīr* (vol.7, p. 137) that:

Saḥīḥ Muslim and *Sunan al-Bayhaqī* say that Abū Hudhayfah said:

قُلْتُ يَا رَسُولَ اللهِ إِنَّا كُنَّا بِشَرٍّ فَجَاءَ اللهُ بِخَيْرٍ فَنَحْنُ فِيهِ فَهَلْ مِنْ وَرَاءِ هَذَا الْخَيْرِ شَرٌّ قَالَ نَعَمْ قُلْتُ هَلْ وَرَاءَ ذَلِكَ الشَّرِّ خَيْرٌ قَالَ نَعَمْ قُلْتُ فَهَلْ وَرَاءَ ذَلِكَ الْخَيْرِ شَرٌّ قَالَ نَعَمْ قُلْتُ كَيْفَ قَالَ يَكُونُ بَعْدِي أَئِمَّةٌ لَا يَهْتَدُونَ بِهُدَايَ وَلَا يَسْتَنُّونَ بِسُنَّتِي وَسَيَقُومُ فِيهِمْ رِجَالٌ قُلُوبُهُمْ قُلُوبُ الشَّيَاطِينِ فِي جُثْمَانِ إِنْسٍ قَالَ قُلْتُ كَيْفَ أَصْنَعُ يَا رَسُولَ اللهِ إِنْ أَدْرَكْتُ ذَلِكَ قَالَ تَسْمَعُ وَتُطِيعُ لِلْأَمِيرِ وَإِنْ ضُرِبَ ظَهْرُكَ وَأُخِذَ مَالُكَ فَاسْمَعْ وَأَطِعْ.

I said: "God's Messenger, we were badly off until God brought us good. Now, will there be bad after this good?"

He replied: "Yes, there will be."

I then asked: "Will there be good after that bad?"

He replied: "Yes, there will be."

I asked: "How?"

He replied: "After I pass away, there will be rulers who do not follow my guidance and do not follow my practices. There will rise among them men whose hearts are devils' hearts in a human body."

I asked: "What should I do, God's Messenger, if I live to see that?"

He said: "Listen and obey the ruler—even if he beats your back and takes your property."

There is another narration by 'Awf ibn Mālik al-Ashja'ī on the authority of the Prophet in *Saḥīḥ Muslim* and *Sunan Bayhaqī*:

خِيَارُ أَئِمَّتِكُمُ الَّذِينَ تُحِبُّونَهُمْ وَيُحِبُّونَكُمْ وَيُصَلُّونَ عَلَيْكُمْ وَتُصَلُّونَ عَلَيْهِمْ وَشِرَارُ أَئِمَّتِكُمُ الَّذِينَ تُبْغِضُونَهُمْ وَيُبْغِضُونَكُمْ وَتَلْعَنُونَهُمْ وَيَلْعَنُونَكُمْ قِيلَ يَا رَسُولَ اللهِ أَفَلَا نُنَابِذُهُمْ بِالسَّيْفِ فَقَالَ لَا مَا أَقَامُوا فِيكُمُ الصَّلَاةَ وَإِذَا رَأَيْتُمْ مِنْ وُلَاتِكُمْ شَيْئًا تَكْرَهُونَهُ فَاكْرَهُوا عَمَلَهُ وَلَا تَنْزِعُوا يَدًا مِنْ طَاعَةٍ

Your best leaders are those whom you love and who love you, upon whom you invoke blessing and who invoke blessing upon you. Your worst leaders are those whom you hate and who hate you, whom you curse and who curse you.

It was said: "God's Messenger, should we not cast them off with the sword?"

He replied: "Not as long as they establish prayer among you; if you see something from your leaders that you hate, hate his deed but do not rip a hand away from obedience."

It is also narrated on the authority of Salamah ibn Yazīd al-Juᶜfī in *Saḥīḥ Muslim* and *Sunan al-Bayhaqī*:

I said:

يا رسول الله إن قامت علينا أمراء يسألونا حقهم ويمنعونا حقنا، فما تأمرنا؟ قال: فأعرض عنه رسول صلي الله عليه و آله، ثم سأله فقال: اسمعوا وأطيعوا، فإنما عليهم ما حملوا وعليكم ما حملتم.

"O Prophet, if leaders rise among us demanding their rights but depriving us of our rights, what do you instruct us to do?" [The narrator] says the Prophet (s) turned away from him. [The narrator] then asked him [again] and so he replied: "Listen and obey, because they are responsible for what they have been charged with, and you are responsible for what you have been charged with."

It is also narrated on the authority of Miqdām in *Sunan al-Bayhaqī* that the Prophet said:[82]

أطيعوا أُمَرَاءَكُمْ ما كانَ؛ فإنْ أمروكُمْ بما حَدَّثْتُكُمْ بِهِ فإنَّهُمْ يُؤْجَرونَ عَلَيْهِ وتُؤْجَرونَ بِطاعَتِكُمْ. وإنْ أمروكُمْ بِشَيْءٍ مِمَّا لَمْ أمُرْكُمْ بِهِ فَهُوَ عَلَيْهِمْ، وأنْتُمْ مِنْهُ بُرَءَاءُ، ذَلِكَ بِأنَّكُمْ إذا لَقِيتُمُ اللهَ قُلْتُمْ: رَبَّنا لا ظُلْمَ. فَيَقُولُ: لا ظُلْمَ. وتَقُولُونَ: رَبَّنا أرْسَلْتَ إلَيْنا رَسُولا فأطَعْنا واسْتَخْلَفْتَ عَلَيْنا خُلَفاءَ فأطَعْناهُمْ بِإذْنِكَ، وأمَّرْتَ عَلَيْنا أُمَراءَ فأطَعْناهُمْ بِإذْنِكَ. فَيَقُولُ: صَدَقْتُمْ. هُوَ عَلَيْهِمْ وأنْتُمْ مِنْهُ بَرَاءُ.

Follow your leaders, whatever it may be. If they command you to do what I have told you, they will receive reward for that, and you will be rewarded for your obedience; but if they command you to do what I have not commanded you, then they will be accountable for it and you are blameless. That is because when you meet God, you will say: "Our Lord, no wrongdoing?" He will say: "No wrongdoing?" You will reply: "Our Lord, You sent us a Messenger and we obeyed and You appointed caliphs for us and we obeyed them with Your permission. You imposed leaders upon us and we obeyed them with Your permission."[83] He will reply: "You have spoken the truth; they are accountable for it and you are innocent of it."

There is a *hadith* on the authority of Suwayd ibn Ghaflah in *Sunan al-Bayhaqī* that says:84

قال لي عمر بن الخطاب: يا أبا أُمَيَّةَ لَعَلَّكَ أنْ تَخْلُفَ بَعْدي؛ فَأطِعِ الإمامَ وإنْ كانَ عَبْداً حَبَشِيّاً. إنْ ضَرَبَكَ فاصْبِرْ، وإنْ أمَرَكَ بِأمْرٍ فاصْبِرْ، وإنْ حَرَمَكَ فاصْبِرْ، وإنْ ظَلَمَكَ فاصْبِرْ؛ وإنْ أمَرَكَ بِأمْرٍ يُنْقِصُ دينَكَ قُلْ: سَمْعٌ وطاعَةٌ، دَمِي دُونَ دِيني.

'Umar ibn al-Khaṭṭāb told me:

> Abū Umayyah, you may outlive me, so obey the leader even if he is an Abyssinian slave. If he beats you, have forbearance. If he gives you a command, have forbearance. If he deprives you, have forbearance. If he does you wrong, have forbearance. If he commands you to do something that lessens your faith, say: "I hear and obey. My blood is less important than my religion."[84]

Suyūṭī narrates from Ibn Jarīr on the authority of Ibn Zayd regarding His words, Transcendent is He:

وَاولِي الْاَمْرِ مِنْكُمْ

those of you who are in authority:

قَالَ: قَالَ اُبَيٌّ: هُمُ السَّلاطِينُ، قَالَ: وَقَالَ رَسُولُ اللهِ صلى الله عليه و آله وسلم: الطَّاعَةَ وَفِي الطَّاعَةِ بَلاءٌ. وَ قَالَ: لَوْ شَاءَ اللهُ لَجَعَلَ الْاَمْرَ فِي الْاَنْبِياءِ ـ يَعنِي لَقَدْ جَعَلَ الَيْهِمْ وَالْاَنْبِياءُ مَعَهُم ـ الا تَرى حِينَ حَكَمُوا فِي قَتْلِ يَحْيَى بْنِ زَكَرِيَّا.

He said Ubayy said: "They are the rulers." He said: "God's Messenger stated: 'Obedience, even when obedience is trying. If God so desired He would have put the Prophets in charge,' meaning them and the Prophets with them. Do you not see that they sentenced John son of Zechariah to death?"

Būkhārī says Anas narrates:

قَالَ رسول اللهِ صلى الله عليه و آله وسلم: اِسمعوا واطيعوا وان استعمل عليكم حبشيٌ كان رأسه زبيبة.

The Prophet said: Listen and obey even if an Abyssinian slave whose head is a raisin is appointed as your governor![85]

He narrates on the authority of Abū Hurayrah that the Prophet said:

سَيَلِيكُمْ بَعْدِي وُلاةٌ فَيَلِيكُمُ الْبَرُّ بِبِرِّهِ وَالْفَاجِرُ بِفُجُورِهِ فَاسْمَعُوا لَهُمْ وَأَطِيعُوا فِي كُلِّ مَا وَافَقَ الْحَقَّ وَصَلُّوا وَرَاءَهُمْ. فَإِنْ أَحْسَنُوا فَلَهُمْ وَلَكُمْ. وَإِنْ أَسَاءُوا فَلَكُمْ وَعَلَيْهِمْ.

Leaders will follow me after I am gone, the good with their good and the wicked with their wickedness, but listen to them and obey everything in conformity with the truth. Pray behind them. If they do good, they and you will be rewarded, but if they do wrong, you will be rewarded but they will be accountable.[86]

In any event, these are the *hadiths* that they have printed in their books, and on which they base their claim that it is mandatory to obey whoever is in charge. They believe that there is a duty to obey as long as they establish prayers—whoever they are and whatever they do. Of course, it is quite clear that all these *hadiths* are fabricated.

After the tyrannical rulers came to power, especially during Mu'āwiyah's time, everything changed. To cover up their wrongdoing, the so-called clergymen of their time fabricated *hadiths*. They spread them among the people. Contrary to the clear verses of the Qur'an and the laws and *hadiths* of the Holy Messenger, they published some fake

hadiths and distributed them among the people. The Prophet had foreseen the tragedy and said: "*Hadith* will appear among the people after I am gone. Whatever you find that contradicts God's Book, slam it on the wall." He meant: "Throw it away. Do not take care of it, because a few narrators have related it to mislead the people."

Therefore, before checking the basis of those *hadith*, we must compare them with the Book of God.

The Verses That Express the Followers of the Obedience of the Sinners

Here, we cite some verses from the Holy Qur'an:

فَلَا تُطِعِ الْمُكَذِّبِينَ

So do not obey the rejecters. (68:8)

وَلَا تُطِعْ كُلَّ حَلَّافٍ مَّهِينٍ

And do not obey any vile oath monger. (68:10)

وَلَا تُطِعِ الْكَافِرِينَ وَالْمُنَافِقِينَ وَدَعْ أَذَاهُمْ وَتَوَكَّلْ عَلَى اللَّهِ

And do not obey the disbelievers and hypocrites. Disregard their annoyance and rely on God. (33:48)

فَلَا تُطِعِ الْكَافِرِينَ وَجَاهِدْهُم بِهِ جِهَادًا كَبِيرًا

So do not obey the disbelievers. Strive against them with a great endeavor. (25:52)

وَلَا تُطِيعُوا أَمْرَ الْمُسْرِفِينَ

And do not follow the order of extravagant people. (26:151)

فَاصْبِرْ لِحُكْمِ رَبِّكَ وَلَا تُطِعْ مِنْهُمْ آثِمًا أَوْ كَفُورًا

So be patient concerning your Lord's command and do not obey any sinners or ungrateful among them. (76:24)

وَلَا تُطِعْ مَنْ أَغْفَلْنَا قَلْبَهُ عَن ذِكْرِنَا وَاتَّبَعَ هَوَاهُ وَكَانَ أَمْرُهُ فُرُطًا

And obey not one whose heart We have made unaware of Our remembrance, who pursues his caprice, and whose affair has been lost. (18:28)

يَوْمَ تُقَلَّبُ وُجُوهُهُمْ فِي النَّارِ يَقُولُونَ يَا لَيْتَنَا أَطَعْنَا اللَّهَ وَأَطَعْنَا الرَّسُولَا وَقَالُوا رَبَّنَا إِنَّا أَطَعْنَا سَادَتَنَا وَكُبَرَاءَنَا فَأَضَلُّونَا السَّبِيلَا رَبَّنَا آتِهِمْ ضِعْفَيْنِ مِنَ الْعَذَابِ وَالْعَنْهُمْ لَعْنًا كَبِيرًا.

The Day when their faces will be twisted by the Fire, they will say: "If we had only obeyed God and obeyed the Messenger!" And they will say: "Our Lord, we obeyed our masters and our great men, but they led us astray from the Path. O our Lord! Let them have double chastisement and afflict them with a mighty curse." (33:67–68)

وَذَرُوا ظَاهِرَ الْإِثْمِ وَبَاطِنَهُ إِنَّ الَّذِينَ يَكْسِبُونَ الْإِثْمَ سَيُجْزَوْنَ بِمَا كَانُوا يَقْتَرِفُونَ وَلَا تَأْكُلُوا مِمَّا لَمْ يُذْكَرِ اسْمُ اللَّهِ عَلَيْهِ وَإِنَّهُ لَفِسْقٌ وَإِنَّ الشَّيَاطِينَ لَيُوحُونَ إِلَى أَوْلِيَائِهِمْ لِيُجَادِلُوكُمْ وَإِنْ أَطَعْتُمُوهُمْ إِنَّكُمْ لَمُشْرِكُونَ.

And keep away from open and secret sin; those who commit sin will have retribution for what they have committed. And do not eat of anything over which God's name has not been pronounced, for lo! It is abomination. Lo! The devils inspire their companions to dispute with you; and if you obey them, you will be polytheists. (6:120–121)

كَلَّا لَا تُطِعْهُ وَاسْجُدْ وَاقْتَرِبْ.

No, obey him not, but prostrate and get closer. (96:19)

Nevertheless, these are the verses that tell people not to obey or follow wrong-doers in any way—they strictly forbid supporting them.

Therefore, as these *hadiths* contradict clear verses of the Qur'an, they are completely unreliable; it is an unforgivable sin to attribute them to God's Messenger. Whoever is familiar with God's Book and the Messenger's practice, as well as with the spirit of the religion, immediately realizes the invalidity of such *hadith*.[87]

When God tells a man not to obey his sinful parents, how can He command people to obey corrupt oppressors? As He states:

وَإِن جَاهَدَاكَ لِتُشْرِكَ بِي مَا لَيْسَ لَكَ بِهِ عِلْمٌ فَلَا تُطِعْهُمَا.

...but if they should urge you to associate [partners] with Me, of which you have no knowledge, then do not obey them. (29:8)

وَإِنْ جَاهَدَاكَ عَلَى أَنْ تُشْرِكَ بِي مَا لَيْسَ لَكَ بِهِ عِلْمٌ فَلَا تُطِعْهُمَا.

...but if they should urge you to associate [partners] with Me, which you have no knowledge about, then do not obey them. (31:15)

The Imam Must Be the Best and Should Be in Charge of the Nation's Affairs

Their claim that another can manage the nation's affairs even when the best is available in the nation is far from correct and is inappropriate. It is because as long as people have not reached the level of pure Monotheism and meeting with God, there is still some relative disparity between them. It is possible that a certain man may be better in one respect, and the next is better at something else; however, when one reaches a state of absolute submission then relative merit will cease. How can someone else—even in any respect—be preferred to God's Friend who has exceeded all attributes of contingency and metaphorical existence, has become existent through God's Existence and is immersed in the sea of infinite Monotheism?

The attributes of God's Friend are levelled into God's attributes, and his soul and proficiencies are beyond the world of measure and comparison. There is no limit or measure to his knowledge, ability, or life. In all his attributes he is the best in the entire nation without exception. Because God's Messenger was more perfect than and superior to all the others without exception, was the edifier and the one who perfected the others, and did not once strike with his sword without getting closest to the enemy, to strengthen his people's hearts, and spent more, was more self-sacrificing, knew more, was more enthusiastic, more faithful, and immeasurably superior in every attribute, so, too is the Imam. For, when we suppose he has reached the state of certainty and absolute Monotheism, and he has the authority to educate, train and govern the nation—he has to have such superiority; the greatest Sunni mystics accept this fact.

Although the Imam himself is in authority, he assigns different tasks to citizens of the nation and then supervises them in fulfilling their tasks. However, there is a difference between all those tasks being performed under the Imam's supervision, with those tasked obeying and following him, and with those tasked having autonomy to perform them, as per the Sunni claim. This autonomy to perform is the basis of the problem, because it is what leads them away from the truth.

If they do their jobs under the supervision of the Imam, first of all, the Imam dismisses those who are clumsy and unskilled in their jobs, as the Master of the Faithful did with 'Uthmān's governors, and he dismissed Mu'āwiyah from his post as governor of the Levant.

Secondly, if they are under the Imam's direct supervision, they are safeguarded from transgression and wrongdoing, because if they make the tiniest mistake, the Imam warns and stops them. This can clearly be inferred from his communication with 'Uthmān ibn Ḥunayf, whom he had appointed as the governor of Basra, and, from another communication of his with 'Abdullāh ibn 'Abbās, who was the governor there after that. Here, the Imam is like the heart, which repairs parts that are unhealthy. When it cannot repair a part, that part is cut off from it, because an unhealthy limb has to be amputated. But if the Imam is not infallible, those working under his authority do so under the supervision of someone who is not infallible. The governors he appoints are under his supervision, and in such circumstances what misdeeds are left undone? Furthermore, a leader may initially be honest and not at all tyrannical or oppressive. However, later on, love of leadership turns him into a different person. Leadership is an amazing and extremely difficult test that destroys a person.

A Fallible Person's Being in Charge of the Societal Affairs Always Leads to Slips and Deviation

Who but an infallible person can escape these hazards? Title, prestige, power, and flattery gradually delude a person and then slowly but surely his pure soul is contaminated, his tender heart becomes cruel, his mercy becomes mercilessness, his eyes become tearless, and his humility in prayer turns into heedlessness and neglect, until he becomes one with the wicked and the sinners.

This has been proven in psychology, and theologians discuss it in their books. Apart from that, there are countless testimonies and proofs in this field. So how can authority be given to such an imperfect person by God's decree, when first, his soul is prone to perdition, and second, he leads an entire nation to perdition through his bad conduct? As is stated:

يَقْدُمُ قَوْمَهُ يَوْمَ الْقِيَامَةِ فَأَوْرَدَهُمُ النَّارَ.

He will go before his people on the Day of Resurrection and lead them into Hell. (11:98)

Nevertheless, many Sunnis believe the caliph has autonomy and say: "If a caliph considers a law to be good for the nation, he can pass it even if it contravenes and conflicts with God's law and explicitly contradicts the religion."[88] As has been seen, many of the caliphs did whatever they thought best in addressing new problems.

'Umar banned temporary marriage and major *ḥajj* (*ḥajj al-tamattu'*), deleted "Hasten to the best action" from the call to prayer, and so on. Pursuant to the duty to obey *those in authority*, Sunnis obey whatever commands are given by the caliphs.

Similarly, Suyūṭī narrates that when 'Ikrimah was asked about *ummahāt al-awlād*, he answered: "They are free; that is, whenever slave-girls bear their masters' children and give birth, they are no longer slaves and are freed." Some people asked him for evidence in support of his opinion, and he replied: "The Qur'an." They said: "Which [verse] of the Qur'an do you mean?"

He said:

يَاأَيُّهَاالَّذِينَ آمَنُوا أَطِيعُوا اللهَ وَأَطِيعُوا الرَّسُولَ وَأُولِي الأَمرِ مِنكُم.

O you who believe, obey God, and obey the Messenger and those in authority among you. (4:59)

Because this verse means obedience to *those in authority* is mandatory, 'Umar was *in authority*, and ruled that slave mothers of their masters' children should be freed, the Qur'an rules that they should be freed.

"Those in Authority" Have no Right to Make Religious Laws

This is wrong for two reasons: firstly, we said that only *those...in authority* and no one else are infallible; and secondly, we said that legislation of primary rulings is exclusive to God's Book. However, secondary rulings, particulars of the laws, and identification of subject matters are up to God's Messenger. *Those...in authority* are not entitled as evidenced by the verse which says when there is a dispute *refer it to God and the Messenger.*

Thus, all the particular and universal opinions and rulings that issued from the caliphs are not approved by the legislator.

Indeed, this Sunni group believes that whenever something is for the benefit of society, and the requirements of every time sometimes dictate that the caliph should make an exception to the rule, the people have to obey his ruling even it contradicts Scripture and Sunnah. This ruling is supported by the religion pursuant to the verse of *those...in authority;* it is because the religion is only for the benefit of the people and has been established for their benefit. As the caliph rules pursuant to the verse on *those...in authority*, and he made this exception to the rule contrary to religious proof-texts, it must be with the Legislator's approval.

When one refers to history, one notices that from the birth of Islam many rulers have taken control of the people to govern them. Thus,

during the Umayyad and Abbāsid eras a great many laws were passed by the rulers, governors, and judges. According to what they say, then, the religion means nothing, because in their opinion the religion means public interest, such that whenever a caliph desires, he can add something to it or cut it from the root. They can change God's and His Messenger's Law as they please. It is like what is common in other societies—where those involved in politics in every age rule and implement what is in accordance with that group's interests. According to this theory, the religion is just societal custom because Prophets in ancient times would explain it in religious wrapping and in the form of divulging revelation to educate people. Similarly, some explicitly state that religion is a societal custom in the guise of revelation. Gabriel, the existence of Heaven, Hell, the Path, the Book, and so on are all simplifications to help people understand and subjugate them; now that science has improved, there is no need to educate the people by the means of religion. Religion used to be one of many lessons to teach the people of yore. Just as archaeologists extract things from the earth while studying remains in the layers of the earth and proceed to delve into the lives and particulars of the people of that time, so too must sociologists now delve into religious studies questions in the same way.

If Sunnis mean that obedience to the caliphs is mandatory no matter what, then there is no point even arguing with them, because this claim ultimately means denying God, hidden worlds, the heavenly kingdom, ethical virtues, the Resurrection, and the Prophets' link to the angels.

However, if they mean that even though they believe in God and His Messenger, the caliphs are entitled to pass their own law in accordance with current interests and people's receptivity, then we should say in reply to them that the religion has primacy, and religious laws take precedence over societal considerations and interests. In other words, societies must be put right by religious teachings, and the people must be educated through the Divine teachings. A society must be trained and directed to the straight path according to the laws and commands of the religion; the religion must not lose its primacy. A society separated from religion cannot stand on its own two feet—the religion commands one thing but it acts upon something else, and in the end, it collapses.

Now, to prove what we say, we rely on some verses as evidence; it is stated:

إِنِ الْحُكْمُ إِلَّا لِلَّهِ يَقُصُّ الْحَقَّ وَهُوَ خَيْرُ الْفَاصِلِينَ

The decision is God's alone. He tells the truth and He is the Best of Deciders. (6:57)

فَمَاذَا بَعْدَ الْحَقِّ إِلَّا الضَّلَالُ فَأَنَّىٰ تُصْرَفُونَ.

What is there after the Truth except error? How then are you turned away? (10:32)

وَمَن لَّمْ يَحْكُم بِمَا أَنزَلَ اللَّهُ فَأُولَٰئِكَ هُمُ الْكَافِرُونَ.

Whoever do not judge according to what God has sent down are of the unbelievers. (5:44)

وَمَن لَّمْ يَحْكُم بِمَا أَنزَلَ اللَّهُ فَأُولَٰئِكَ هُمُ الظَّالِمُونَ.

Whoever do not judge according to what God has sent down are of the wrong-doers. (5:45)

وَمَن لَّمْ يَحْكُم بِمَا أَنزَلَ اللَّهُ فَأُولَٰئِكَ هُمُ الْفَاسِقُونَ.

Whoever do not judge by what God has sent down are the transgressors. (5:47)

فَاحْكُم بَيْنَهُم بِمَا أَنزَلَ اللَّهُ وَلَا تَتَّبِعْ أَهْوَاءَهُمْ عَمَّا جَاءَكَ مِنَ الْحَقِّ لِكُلٍّ جَعَلْنَا مِنكُمْ شِرْعَةً وَمِنْهَاجًا.

So judge among them according to what God has sent down, and do not follow their desires away from the truth that has come to you. We have given every one of you a code of law and a course. (5:48)

وَأَنِ احْكُم بَيْنَهُم بِمَا أَنزَلَ اللَّهُ وَلَا تَتَّبِعْ أَهْوَاءَهُمْ.

...and judge among them according to what God has sent down, and do not follow their desires. (5:49)

He also states:

وَكَذَٰلِكَ أَنزَلْنَاهُ حُكْمًا عَرَبِيًّا وَلَئِنِ اتَّبَعْتَ أَهْوَاءَهُم بَعْدَ مَا جَاءَكَ مِنَ الْعِلْمِ مَا لَكَ مِنَ اللَّهِ مِن وَلِيٍّ وَلَا وَاقٍ.

...Thus We have sent it down as a judgment in Arabic. If you follow their desires, after the knowledge has come to you, you will have neither a protector nor supporter against God. (13:37)

يَا دَاوُودُ إِنَّا جَعَلْنَاكَ خَلِيفَةً فِي الْأَرْضِ فَاحْكُم بَيْنَ النَّاسِ بِالْحَقِّ وَلَا تَتَّبِعِ الْهَوَىٰ فَيُضِلَّكَ عَن سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ إِنَّ الَّذِينَ يَضِلُّونَ عَن سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ لَهُمْ عَذَابٌ شَدِيدٌ بِمَا نَسُوا يَوْمَ الْحِسَابِ.

O David, We have made you Vicegerent on earth, so judge among men according to justice and follow not the desires lest they lead you away from God's path. Surely those who stray from God's path will have severe chastisement because they forgot the Day of Reckoning! (38:26)

وَاعْلَمُوا أَنَّ فِيكُمْ رَسُولَ اللهِ لَوْ يُطِيعُكُمْ فِي كَثِيرٍ مِنَ الْأَمْرِ لَعَنِتُّمْ.

...and know that the Prophet is among you, if he obeys you in many matters, you will surely face troubles. (49:7)

In any event, the reason for all these invalid rules passed by them is that after the demise of the Prophet they diverted the religion from its original axis and applied personal judgment to rulings to satisfy their desires. And consequently, after them, the caliphs followed their newly established way of ruling, adding their own opinions to it and calling it public interest!

The Master of the Faithful's Criticism of the Usurpers of the Caliphate

حَتّٰى اذا قَبَضَ اللهُ رَسُولَهُ صلى الله عليه و آله وسلم رَجَعَ قَوْمٌ عَلَى الْأَعْقَابِ وَ غالَتْهُمُ السُّبُلُ وَ اتَّكَلُوا عَلَى الْوَلائِجِ وَ وَصَلُوا غَيْرَ الرَّحِمِ وَ هَجَرُوا السَّبَبَ الَّذِي امِرُوا بِمَوَدَّتِهِ وَ نَقَلُوا الْبِناءَ عَنْ رَصِّ اساسِهِ فَبَنَوْهُ فِي غَيْرِ مَوْضِعِهِ مَعادِنُ كُلِّ خَطِيئَةٍ، وَ اَبْوابُ كُلِّ ضارِبٍ فِي غَمْرَةٍ.

[It was so] until when the Prophet (s) passed away, the people turned on their heels. The paths seized them, they trusted in the secret depths [of the heart], maintained good relations not with the close relations, and abandoned the means that they had been ordered to love. They moved the building from the compactness of its foundation and built it out of its place—the sources of every single sin and the doors of gropers in the dark.[89]

Then, he added:

قد ماروا في الحيرة وذهلوا في السكرة على سنة من آلِ فرعون من منقطعٍ إلى الدنيا راكنٍ أو مفارقٍ للدين مباينٍ.

Certainly, they moved on in their perplexity, and lay intoxicated in the tradition of Pharaoh's family—devoted to and trusting the world or separated from the religion: divorced.[90]

The Holy Master of the Faithful often complained about the usurpers; that is why he calls them the destroyers of the religion. In one of his sermons he says:

اللّٰهُمَّ إِنِّي أَسْتَعْدِيكَ عَلَى قُرَيْشٍ، فَإِنَّهُمْ قَدْ قَطَعُوا رَحِمِي، وَأَكْفَأُوا إِنَائِي، وَأَجْمَعُوا عَلَى مُنَازَعَتِي حَقّاً كُنْتُ أَوْلَى بِهِ مِنْ غَيْرِي، وَقَالُوا: أَلَا إِنَّ فِي الْحَقِّ أَنْ تَأْخُذَهُ، وَفِي الْحَقِّ أَنْ تُمْنَعَهُ، فَاصْبِرْ مَغْمُوماً، أَوْ مُتْ مُتَأَسِّفاً. فَنَظَرْتُ فَإِذَا لَيْسَ لِي رَافِدٌ، وَلَا ذَابٌّ وَلَا مُسَاعِدٌ، إِلَّا أَهْلَ بَيْتِي، فَضَنِنْتُ بِهِمْ عَنِ الْمَنِيَّةِ، فَأَغْضَيْتُ عَلَى الْقَذَى، وَجَرِعْتُ رِيقِي عَلَى الشَّجَا، وَصَبَرْتُ مِنْ كَظْمِ الْغَيْظِ عَلَى أَمَرَّ مِنَ الْعَلْقَمِ، وَآلَمَ لِلْقَلْبِ مِنْ خَزِّ الشِّفَارِ

O God, I ask that You be an enemy to the Quraysh because they cut off my blood relations, caused my patience to come to an end, ganged up to strip me of my right I deserved more than anyone else. They said: "Lo! Some rights you can take and some you can withhold, so bear it grief stricken or die of sorrow!" I looked and lo! I had no helper, defender, or aide except the people of my household, so I spared them from death, bore the annoyance patiently, swallowed down the sticking in my throat with my own spit, and endured, swallowing anger bitterer than colocynth and more painful on the heart than the cutting of knives.[91]

They abandoned him while he was busy preparing God's Messenger for burial, made unholy haste, and gathered under the Banī Sā'idah's Saqīfah and called people to pledge allegiance to them against the will of the Prophet. When he finished preparing the holy body, he noticed that they had carried out their tricks. Satan had prevailed upon them and they had diverted the religion from its straight course. Since then, they confined the Holiness at home, assumed control of the Messenger's pulpit, and climbed on it. They took him by force to the mosque to pledge allegiance to Abū Bakr. When he tried to reason with them, draw their attention to their perdition, and also point out his honored position and virtue, it did not work.

وخرج عليٌّ عليه السلام يحمل فاطمة بنت رسول الله على دابّة ليلاً في مجالس الانصار تسألهم النصرة.

At night, Ali would take God's Messenger's daughter Fāṭimah on a mount to the Anṣār's gatherings to ask them for help.

فكانوا يقولون: يا بنت رسول الله قد مضت بيعتنا لهذا الرجل، ولو أنّ زوجك وابن عمّك سبق إلينا قبل ابي بكر ما عدلنا به.

They used to say: "God's Messenger's daughter, our allegiance to this man has already been pledged. If your husband—your cousin—had beaten Abū Bakr to us, we would not have made do with him."

فيقول عليٌّ عليه السلام: افكنتُ ادعُ رسولَ الله صلى الله عليه وآله وسلم في بيته لأُخرِجَه ثم آتي فأنازع الناسَ سلطانَه؟ فتقول فاطمة: ما صنع ابو الحسن إلا ما كان ينبغي له، ولقد صنعوا ما الله حسيبهم وطالبهم.

Ali would reply: "Would I have left God's Messenger in his house without burying him and gone out to dispute with the people over his authority?" Then, Fāṭimah would say: "Abū al-Hasan did not do anything he should not have, but they did nothing but what God will call them to account and reckon them for!"[92]

Lesson Twenty-One:
The Meaning of *Those in Authority* Is the Infallible Imams

LESSON TWENTY-ONE

In the Name of God, the Merciful, the Compassionate
On the infallibility of the Prophets and the Imams, peace be upon them.
Blessing upon Mohammad and his pure Household, and God's curse on his enemies from now until the Day of Resurrection! There is no power or strength save through the Lofty, Great God.

The Wise God says in His Glorious Book:

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا أَطِيعُوا اللَّهَ وَأَطِيعُوا الرَّسُولَ وَأُولِي الْأَمْرِ مِنكُمْ فَإِن تَنَازَعْتُمْ فِي شَيْءٍ فَرُدُّوهُ إِلَى اللَّهِ وَالرَّسُولِ إِن كُنتُمْ تُؤْمِنُونَ بِاللَّهِ وَالْيَوْمِ الْآخِرِ ذَٰلِكَ خَيْرٌ وَأَحْسَنُ تَأْوِيلًا.

O you who believe, obey God, and obey the Messenger and those in authority among you. Then if you have any dispute over anything, refer to God and the Messenger if you believe in God and the Last Day—for that is better and becoming in the end. (4:59)

Those...in authority means the two weighty things that the Prophet left behind for his nation.

In his final sermon, the Prophet stated:[93]

إِنِّي مُخَلِّفٌ فِيكُمُ الثَّقَلَيْنِ كِتَابَ اللَّهِ وَعِتْرَتِي أَهْلَ بَيْتِي وَإِنَّهُمَا لَنْ يَفْتَرِقَا حَتَّى يَرِدَا عَلَيَّ الْحَوْضَ.

Surely I am leaving two weighty things among you—the Book of God and the People of my Household; surely they will not separate from each other until they come to me at the Pool.[94]

Thus the Qur'an alone, without any teacher or guardian, is not enough. According to the Prophet's words: 'Umar made a mistake when he said: "God's Book is enough for us." This is because the Prophet said: "These two, God's Book and his Household, are inseparable." Therefore, if one takes just one of them, he loses both.

Without the Household, God's Book Is not Sufficient

Therefore, the man who said: "We'll take the Qur'an but leave the Household," has not understood God's Book properly and neither he nor his followers can reach either God's Book or the Household. It is because the Qur'an has an essence and reality more sublime and much more important than these words.

Similarly, if we write a name such as Ḥasan, Ḥusayn, or Ali on a piece of paper, these names have an external reality with a body, soul, limits, characteristics, life, knowledge, ability, appetite, instincts, intentions, and so on. This essence is thousands of times, or even more, sublime and refined. These names are just indicators referring to that reality.

Similarly, the essence of the Qur'an is loftier than, superior to, and quite different from its outward appearance. It is full of facts and truth; it includes all the methodology needed in life, the good and evil paths, Heaven and Hell, the Resurrection and Judgment, and numerous things related to life and death. The words appearing on the pages of the Qur'an are only representative of the facts and truths with which the Imam is familiar. The Imam is aware of all the facts and truths in the Divine Book; in other words, the essence of the Qur'an is with the Imam; as is stated:

وَكُلَّ شَيْءٍ أَحْصَيْنَاهُ فِي إِمَامٍ مُبِينٍ.

And of all things We have taken account in a clear Imam. (36:12)

عليٌّ مع القرآنِ والقرآن مع عليٍّ لا يفترقانِ حتّى يردا عليَّ الحوض.

Ali is with the Qur'an and the Qur'an is with Ali; they will never separate from each other until they come to me at the Pool.[95]

It is obvious that this inseparability is the true essence of the Qur'an—in this seeable and touchable Book:

وَكَذٰلِكَ أَنْزَلْنَا إِلَيْكَ الْكِتَابَ فَالَّذِينَ آتَيْنَاهُمُ الْكِتَابَ يُؤْمِنُونَ بِهِ... وَمَا كُنْتَ تَتْلُوا مِنْ قَبْلِهِ مِنْ كِتَابٍ وَلَا تَخُطُّهُ بِيَمِينِكَ إِذًا لَارْتَابَ الْمُبْطِلُونَ بَلْ هُوَ آيَاتٌ بَيِّنَاتٌ فِي صُدُورِ الَّذِينَ أُوتُوا الْعِلْمَ.

And thus We have revealed to you the Book. So those to whom We have given the Book believe in it...and you did not used to recite any Scripture or transcribe it with your right hand, for then those who speak untruths would certainly have doubted. Rather they are clear signs in the breasts of those who have been given knowledge. (29:47–49)

God also states:

قُلْ كَفَىٰ بِاللَّهِ شَهِيدًا بَيْنِي وَبَيْنَكُمْ وَمَنْ عِنْدَهُ عِلْمُ الْكِتَابِ

Say, "God is sufficient as a Witness between you and me, and so is he who has all the knowledge of the Book." (13:43)

Ali's Full Knowledge of the Qur'an and his Struggle to Save It

There are many *hadith* narrated by both the Sunnis and Shi'a that *he who has all the knowledge of the Book* is the Master of the Faithful, Ali. There is a *hadith* on the authority of the Prophet that says:

انَّ فيكُمْ مَنْ يُقاتِلُ عَلى تَأويلِ القُرآنِ كَما قاتَلْتُ عَلى تَنزيلِهِ. قالَ ابُوبَكرٍ: اَنَا هُوَ يا رَسُولَ اللهِ؟ قالَ: لا.
قالَ عُمَرُ: اَنَا يا رَسُولَ اللهِ؟ قالَ: لا وَلكِنْ خاصِفُ النَّعلِ ـ وَكانَ اَعطى عَلِيّاً نَعلَهُ يَخصِفُها.

There is among you someone who will fight over the interpretation of the Qur'an as I have fought over its revelation.[96]

Abū Bakr asked: "God's Messenger, is it I?" He replied: "No." Then 'Umar asked: "Is it I, God's Messenger?" He answered: "No, rather the sandal cobbler."

He had given his sandal to Ali to cobble.

It is understood from these clear verses that the Master of the Faithful had the most knowledge of the Qur'an and was the true Guardian of the Divine Book; he had been given authority by God to secure it and teach its meaning to the people.

In the light of the above, the claim to refer to the Qur'an, benefit from it, and have no need for narrations on the authority of the Infallibles is a false claim. Besides the fact that God's Book on its own is not enough without an Imam, the Qur'an itself tells us in many verses to refer to the People of the Household, such as:

وَمَا آتَاكُمُ الرَّسُولُ فَخُذُوهُ وَمَا نَهَاكُمْ عَنْهُ فَانْتَهُوا.

Take whatever the Messenger may give you and from whatever he forbids you, keep back. (59:7)

And it is also stated:

إِنَّمَا وَلِيُّكُمُ اللهُ وَرَسُولُهُ وَالَّذِينَ آمَنُوا الَّذِينَ يُقِيمُونَ الصَّلاَةَ وَيُؤْتُونَ الزَّكَاةَ وَهُمْ رَاكِعُونَ.

Your guardian is only God, His Messenger and those who believe, establish prayer, and give charity while they are bowing. (5:55)

Therefore, there are a great many *hadiths* narrated by both the Sunnis and Shi'a that say that these verses refer to Ali.[97] There are also other verses, such as *those...in authority* where God clearly enjoins their obedience.

There are also a great many *hadith* that say *those...in authority* refers exclusively to the Infallible Imams. Therefore, those who say, "We just refer to the Book of God," should know that in some verses in His Book, God refers them to the Prophet, such as:

وَمَاأَرْسَلْنَامِن رَّسُولٍ إِلاَّلِيُطَاعَ بِإِذْنِ اللهِ.

And We did not send any Messenger other than to be obeyed by God's leave. (4:64)

And according to these verses:

أَطِيعُواْاللهَ وَأَطِيعُواْالرَّسُولَ

...obey God and obey the Messenger. (4:59)

أَطِيعُواْاللهَ ورسوله.

Obey God and His Messenger. (24:54, 47:33, 64:12, 3:32, and 3:132)

...obedience to the Prophet is incumbent upon everyone. In the *Thaqalayn Hadith*, the *hadith* referring to the "Two Important Ones," the Clan *Hadith*, the story of Ghadīr, the Sandal Cobbler *Hadith*, the Ark *Hadith*, and others, he enjoins obedience to Ali. In the verse of *those...in authority*, as cited in many *hadith*, God makes obedience to the Infallible Imams mandatory—the authenticity of those *hadith* is confirmed.

In *al-Kafi* and 'Ayyāshī's exegesis it is narrated that Imam Ṣādiq said about the verse on *those...in authority*:

أيّانا عنى خاصّة، أمر جميع المؤمنين إلى يوم القيامة بطاعتنا.

"He means us exclusively. He has made obedience to us mandatory for all believers until the Day of Resurrection."[98]

The Exegesis of Those...in Authority as the Imams and the Revelation of the Verse of Purification

Al-Kāfi also says that when Imam Ṣādiq was asked about the need to obey the executors, he said:

نَعَمْ هُمُ الَّذِينَ قَالَ اللهُ تَعَالَى أَطِيعُوا اللهَ وَأَطِيعُوا الرَّسُولَ وَأُولِي الْأَمْرِ مِنْكُمْ

Yes, they are those about whom the Transcendent God said: *Obey God, and obey the Messenger and those of you who are in authority.*

God says:

إِنَّمَا وَلِيُّكُمُ اللهُ وَرَسُولُهُ وَالَّذِينَ آمَنُوا الَّذِينَ يُقِيمُونَ الصَّلَاةَ وَيُؤْتُونَ الزَّكَاةَ وَهُمْ رَاكِعُونَ.

Your guardian is only God, His Messenger, and those who believe, establish prayer, and give charity while they are bowing. (5:55)

Moreover both *al-Kāfi* and 'Ayyāshī's exegesis say that it is related from Imam Ṣādiq that this verse was revealed about Hasan and Ḥusayn. Then, when some people asked him, "Why has God not mentioned the names of Ali and his Household in His Book?" he replied,

> It is obvious; in the Book, God has enjoined prayer but not said how many—whether to pray two, three, or four rounds of bowing in each prayer. It was the Prophet who clarified and explained the exact number; *zakāt* is also made incumbent in the Qur'an but it does not say that one dirham out of every forty dirhams must be paid in *zakāt*. It was also the Prophet who clarified it. *Ḥajj* is also enjoined in the Book but the number of obligatory circumambulations is not stated. However, the Prophet explained it to the nation. And the verse:
>
> أَطِيعُوا اللهَ وَأَطِيعُوا الرَّسُولَ وَأُولِي الْأَمْرِ مِنْكُمْ
>
> *Obey God, and obey the Messenger and those of you who are in authority*
>
> was revealed about Ali, Hasan, and Husayn, peace be upon them. Later, the Prophet referred to Ali's status by stating:
>
> من كنت مولاه فعليٌّ مولاه
>
> Whoever's Master I am, so too is Ali his Master.

And he said:

أُوصِيكُمْ بِكِتَابِ اللهِ وَأَهْلِ بَيْتِي، فَإِنِّي سَأَلْتُ اللهَ عَزَّ وَجَلَّ أَنْ لَا يُفَرِّقَ بَيْنَهُمَا حَتَّى يُورِدَهُمَا عَلَيَّ الْحَوْضَ، فَأَعْطَانِي ذَلِكَ.

I enjoin you to take hold of the Book and my Household for I asked God not to separate them from each other until He sends them to me at the Pool; God granted me that. And he has said:

لا تعلّموهم فإنّهم اعلم منكم.

Do not try to teach them for they are more knowledgeable than you.[99]

And he said:

وقال: لن يخرجكم من بابِ هديٍ ولن يدخلوكم في بابِ ضلالةٍ.

My Household will never cast you out of the door of guidance or push you through the door of error.

Therefore, if the Prophet had kept silent and had not introduced his Household, then some unknown So-and-So would claim the caliphate; however, Almighty God, in His Book, sent down to the Messenger an affirmation stating:

إِنَّمَا يُرِيدُ اللَّهُ لِيُذْهِبَ عَنكُمُ الرِّجْسَ أَهْلَ الْبَيْتِ وَيُطَهِّرَكُمْ تَطْهِيراً.

God only desires to put away any impurity from you, People of the Household, and to purify you. (33:33)

At that moment, in the house of Umm Salamah, Ali, Hasan, Ḥusayn, and Fāṭimah were with the Prophet when he took them under his cloak and prayed:

اللهمّ إنّ لِكلّ نبيٍّ أهلاً وثقلاً وهؤلاء اهل بيتي وثقلي.

O God, every Messenger has a family and a household and these are my family and household.

Then, Umm Salamah asked: "Am I also of your family?" He replied: "You have a good future, but these alone are my family and household." At that moment, God then revealed the Verse of Purification.[100]

It is related that Imam Ṣādiq, peace be upon him, was asked what the pillars of the Islam were built on and which deeds, if adopted, would grow, and, no matter what one was ignorant of, it would do one no harm after that. He answered:

It is built on testifying that:

لا الهَ الّا اللهُ وَمُحَمَّدٌ رَسُولُ اللهِ صلى الله عليه و آله وسلم.

...there is no deity except God, and Mohammad (s) is God's Messenger,

accepting what God has revealed to His Messenger, giving charitable dues—*zakāt*—and the guardianship that God has enjoined—the guardianship of Mohammad's Family, God's blessings and peace be upon them all, for God's Messenger (s) said:

مَن مات ولم يعرف إمام زمانِهِ مات ميتةً جاهليّةً.

"Whoever dies before without knowing the Imam of his time, dies the death of the [Days of] Ignorance."

God has stated:

أَطِيعُوا اللهَ وَأَطِيعُوا الرَّسُولَ وَأُولِي الأَمرِ مِنكُم.

Obey God, and obey the Messenger and those of you who are in authority.

فَكانَ عَلِيٌّ عليه السلام ثُمَّ صارَ مِن بَعدِ الحَسَنُ ثُمَّ مِن بَعدِ الحُسَينُ ثُمَّ مِن بَعدِ عَلِيُّ بنَ الحُسَينِ ثُمَّ مِن بَعدِ مُحَمَّدُ بنُ عَلِيٍّ ثُمَّ هَكَذا يَكُونُ الأَمرُ، انَّ الأَرضَ لا تَصلُحُ الّا بِإمامٍ عَلَيهِمُ السَّلامُ.[101]

So it was Ali; after him it then passed to Hasan, then after him to Ḥusayn, then after him to Ali ibn al-Ḥusayn and then after him to Muhammad ibn Ali and so on the matter will be. Surely the earth is not sound without an Imam.

Mansūr ibn Dāzim's Reasoning for the Need for an Imam to Exist Who Understands the Meaning of the Qur'an

Muhammad ibn Yaᶜqūb Kulāyni relates that Mansūr ibn Ḥazim said:

I said to Abū 'Abdullāh: "God is too Great to be known by His creatures but it is the creatures that are known through God." He replied: "You have spoken the truth." I said:

> Whoever knows that he has a Lord should know that Lord has pleasure and displeasure and that that pleasure and displeasure can only be known through revelation or a Messenger. Whoever is not visited with revelation should seek out the Messengers. When he finds them, he should know that they are the Proof and that obedience to them is mandatory.

I asked the people: "Do you know that God's Messenger (s) was a Proof from God for His creatures?" They replied: "Yes."

I asked: "When God's Messenger passed away, who was the proof for His creatures?" They replied: "The Qur'an."

I then reflected upon the Qur'an and noticed that it was used by Murji'ites, fatalists and heretics[102] (*al-zindīq*) who do not believe in God to dispute and defeat people in disputes.

However, I realized that the Qur'an is not a proof without a guardian, everything said by him about it being true.

I then asked them: "Who is the Qur'an's Guardian?" They replied: "Well, Ibn Mas'ūd knew, 'Umar knew, and Ḥudhayfah knew."

I asked: "All of it?" They replied: "No." I could then find no one else said to know it all apart from Ali ibn Abī Ṭālib. When something came up between the people, this one would say: "I do not know," that one would say: "I do not know," and the other would say: "I do not know." This one would say: "I know," so testify that Ali (as) was the Qur'an's Guardian, that obedience to him was mandatory, that after God's Messenger (s), he was God's Proof for His creatures and that whatever he said about the Qur'an was true.

He said: "May God have mercy upon you!"[103]

Imam Sādiq's Companions' Debate with a Levantine about the Imamate

Kulāyni narrates via his chain of narration, also on the authority of Yūnis ibn Ya'qūb:

> I was sitting with Abū 'Abdullāh (as) when a Levantine approached us and said: "I am an expert in theology, jurisprudence and probate. I have come to debate with your companions." Abū 'Abdullāh (as) asked: "Are your words your own words or God's Messenger's (s) words?"
>
> He replied: "Some are God's Messenger's words and some are my own."
>
> The Holiness stated: "So are you the God's Messenger's partner?" His reply was: "No." Abū 'Abdullāh (as) then asked: "So you heard revelation from God, telling you?" Again the man said: "No."
>
> The Holiness asked: "So is obedience to you mandatory like obedience to the God's Messenger is mandatory?" He answered, "No."
>
> Abū 'Abdullāh then turned to me and said: "O Yūnis ibn Yaᶜqūb, look! Before speaking, this man has defeated himself."
>
> He then said: "If you are proficient in theological discussion (*al-kalām*) speak to him (*kallamtahu*)."

Yūnis said:

> "What grief!" I then said: "May I be made your sacrifice, surely I heard you forbid theological discussion and debate, and say, 'Woe on those theologians. They say: "This is criticizable, and that is not criticizable; you can say this but cannot say that. You can conceive this but cannot conceive that!"'"
>
> He replied: "I only said 'Woe on them if they reject what I say and go where they want.'"

He then told me: "Now, go out to the door, see which theologians you can see and let them in."

Yūnis says:

So I let in 'Imrān ibn A'yan, who was good at theological discussion, let in *al-Aḥwal* (Cockeye), Muhammad ibn Nu'mān, who was known as Mu'min Ṭāq (the believer of the arch), who was good at theological discussion, let in Hishām ibn Sālim, who was good at theological discussion, and let in Qays ibn al-Māṣir, who in my view was the best of them at theological discussion—he had learned theology from Ali ibn al-Husayn (as).

When all of them came to the Holiness in the tent that was put up close to the House of Ka'ba for that Highness to settle during the days of the ceremonies of the *ḥajj* pilgrimage—everyone sat and the session was to begin. It was then that he looked out through the opening of the tent and saw a man on a camel approaching the tent. He turned to his guests and said: "By the Lord of the House, it's Hishām." We thought it was Hishām, one of the grandsons of 'Aqīl, whom he loved very much. Right then, Hishām ibn al-Ḥakam entered the tent. His beard had only just started growing and not one of us was not older than he was. Abū 'Abdullāh then made room for him and said:

ناصِرنا بِقَلبِهِ ولِسانِهِ ويَدِهِ

Our supporter with his heart, tongue, and hand.

He then said: "Ḥamrān, debate with him." Ḥamrān started his debate and prevailed on him. Soon after, he said: "Now, you, Tāqī,[104] discuss with that man."

He too began discussing and before long prevailed upon him. Next, he said: "Hishām ibn Sālim, start your discussion with this man." Those two competed. Then, he said: "Qays ibn Māṣir, debate with this man." He started his discussion with the man and cornered the man with his skillfulness; the man halted, which made the Holiness laugh. He then told the Levantine: "Now, debate with this boy (Hishām ibn al-Ḥakam)."

The Levantine said: "Of course," and then, he turned to Hishām and said: "Boy, ask me about this man's, Imamate."

So Hishām shook with anger, and asked: "That man, is God more attentive to His creatures or they to themselves?"

The Syrian said: "Of course, it is God Who is more attentive."

Hishām asked: "So what did He do for them through His clear-sight?"

The Levantine answered: "He establishes a Proof for them and a guide so they do not split up and fall into disagreement. Those Guardians make them be friends and kind to one another, bring them

to the straight path, and let them know their religious duties and God's commands."

Hishām asked: "Who is such a guide?"

The Levantine replied: "It is the Prophet."

Hishām said: "Who is the Proof after the Prophet?"

The Levantine replied: "God's Book and His Messenger."

Hishām asked: "Now, are the laws and *hadiths* of the Messenger and God's Book enough to settle our differences?"

The Levantine replied: "Yes, of course."

Hishām said: "Then, why have you come here from the Levant to discuss your differences with us?"

Yūnis says:

The Levantine kept quiet, and so Abū 'Abdullāh asked him: "What's wrong? Why don't you speak?" The Levantine said:

> If I say that we have no differences then I would be lying, and if I say the Book and the Sunnah eliminate our differences I would be talking nonsense, because they are both open to interpretation. And if I say that we have differences with each other and every one should claim to be right, then the Book and Sunnah profit us not unless I have an authority over [the Book].

Abū 'Abdullāh said: "Ask him. You will find him to be patient."

The Levantine asked: "That man, who is more attentive to the creatures—their Lord or themselves?"

Hishām said: "Their Lord is more attentive to them than they are to themselves."

The Levantine asked: "Has He established for them someone to unite them, furnish them with the means of subsistence, and tell them right from wrong?"

Hishām asked: "Do you mean at the time of God's Messenger (s), or at this time?"

The Levantine said: "During God's Messenger's time it was God's Messenger. Who is it at this time?"

Hishām replied: "This man sitting here, whom [people] travel far to see who tells us the tidings of Heaven (and earth) passed down from his father and grandfather."

The Levantine asked: "How can I know that?"

Hishām said: "Ask him whatever occurs to you."

The Levantine said: "You have left me no excuse, so I have to ask."

So Abū 'Abdullāh said: "Levantine, shall I tell you what your journey was like and how your road was? It was such-and-such."

Hearing what he said, the Levantine agreed with him and said:

أسلمت لله الساعة

I have become a Muslim this instant.

He replied:

بل آمنت بالله الساعة

"No, rather you have become a believer in God this instant.

Becoming a Muslim comes before becoming a believer. On the basis of it people inherit from each other and marry others, and belief is rewarded on the basis of it."

The Levantine said:

صَدَقْتَ فَأَنَا السَّاعَةَ أَشْهَدُ أَنْ

You are right, now I testify that:

لا إِلَهَ إِلَّا اللهُ وَأَنَّ مُحَمَّداً رَسُولُ اللهِ صلى الله عليه و آله وسلم وَأَنَّكَ وَصِيُّ الْأَوْصِيَاء.

There is no deity except God and that Mohammad, may God bless him and his Family, is His Messenger and that you are the executor of the executors.

Yūnis says:

He then turned to Ḥamrān and said: "Well, you base your debate on *hadiths* and get it right," and then, he turned to Hishām ibn Sālim, saying: "You want *hadiths* but do not know them." He then turned to al-Aḥwal[105] and said: "Cunning analogy. You overcome falsehood with falsehood but your falsehood is stronger." He then turned to Qays ibn al-Māṣir[106] and said: "You debate, but the closer you are to narration on the authority of God's Messenger's (s) the further you are from it. You mix truth with falsehood, and a little truth obviates the need for much falsehood."

أنت والأحول قفازان حاذقان.

Both you and al-Aḥwal jump here and there.

Yūnis says:

By God, at that moment, I thought that he would say the same to Hishām ibn al-Ḥakam as he had said to those two. However, he told Hishām ibn al-Ḥakam: "O Hishām, you sometimes almost fall but fold in your legs when you nearly reach the ground and fly. Someone like you should debate with people, so beware error and intercession will follow, God willing."[107]

Nu'mānī says in his exegesis that Ismā'īl ibn Jābir said:

سَمِعْتُ اَبَا عَبْدِاللهِ جَعْفَرَبْنَ مُحَمَّدِالصَّادِقَ عليهما السلام يَقُولُ
اِنَّ اللهَ تَبَارَكَ وَتَعالى بَعَثَ مُحَمَّداً فَخَتَمَ بِهِ الْاَنبِياءَ فَلا نَبِيَّ بَعْدَهُ، وَاَنْزَلَ عَلَيْهِ كِتاباً فَخَتَمَ بِهِ الْكُتُبَ فَلا كِتابَ بَعْدَهُ، اَحَلَّ فِيهِ حَلالاً وَحَرَّمَ حَراماً فَالْحَلالُ حَلالٌ اِلى يَوْمِ الْقِيامَةِ وَحَرامُهُ حَرامٌ اِلى يَوْمِ الْقِيامَةِ، فِيهِ شَرْعُكُمْ وَ خَبَرُ مَنْ قَبْلَكُمْ وَبَعْدَكُمْ وَجَعَلَهُ النَّبِيُّ صلى الله عليه و آله وسلم عِلْماً باقِياً فِي اَوْصِيائِهِ.

I heard Abū 'Abdullāh Ja'far ibn Muhammad al-Ṣādiq (as) say:

> The Blessed and Transcendent God sent Mohammad and sealed the Prophets with him, so there is no Prophet after him. He revealed a Book to him and sealed the Books with it so there is no Book after it. In it, He made what is lawful lawful and what is unlawful unlawful. Thus what is lawful in it is lawful until the Day of Resurrection and what is unlawful in it is unlawful until the Day of Resurrection. In it is your law and information on those before and after you. The Prophet (s) deposited eternal knowledge among his executors.

In any case, after the Prophet's death, by crying

كَفانا كِتابُ اللهِ

...God's Book suffices us.

> They distanced the infallible one with the greatest guardianship. Those pursuing worldly gain claimed that succession to the Prophet was a material matter and a matter of public office and sat cross-legged on the thrones prompted by their soul's desire. They led many people towards error and deviation and made the pillar of Islam unstable.[108]

The Sermon of the Master of the Faithful about the Status of Mohammad's Family

In his second sermon in *Nahj al-Balāghah*, the Master of the Faithful says about the Prophet's Household:

هُمْ مَوْضِعُ سِرِّهِ وَلَجَأُ اَمْرِهِ وَعَيْبَةُ عِلْمِهِ وَمَوْئِلُ حُكْمِهِ وَكُهُوفُ كُتُبِهِ وَجِبالُ دِينِهِ. بِهِمْ اَقامَ انْحِناءَ ظَهْرِهِ وَ اَذْهَبَ ارْتِعادَ فَرائِصِهِ وَمِنْها يَعْنِي قَوْماً آخَرِينَ زَرَعُوا الْفُجُورَ وَسَقَوْهُ الْغُرُورَ وَحَصَدُوا الثُّبُورَ. لا يُقاسُ بِآلِ مُحَمَّدٍ صلى الله عليه و آله وسلم مِنْ هذِهِ الْاُمَّةِ اَحَدٌ، وَلا يُسَوّى بِهِمْ مَنْ جَرَتْ نِعْمَتُهُمْ عَلَيْهِ اَبَداً. هُمْ اَساسُ الدِّينِ وَعِمادُ الْيَقِينِ. اِلَيْهِمْ يَفِيءُ الْغالِي، وَبِهِمْ يُلْحَقُ التّالِي. وَلَهُمْ خَصائِصُ حَقِّ الْوِلايَةِ، وَفِيهِمُ الْوَصِيَّةُ وَ الْوِراثَةُ. الْآنَ اِذْ رَجَعَ الْحَقُّ اِلى اَهْلِهِ وَنُقِلَ اِلى مُنْتَقَلِهِ

> They are the trustees of His secrets, shelter for His affairs, source of knowledge about Him, center of His wisdom, valleys for His books, and mountains of His religion. With them God straightened the bend of the religion's back and stopped its shoulders from trembling.[109]

And [others] among them sowed vices, watered them with deception, and harvested destruction. None in the Islamic community can be put on a par with the Progeny of the Prophet (the Household of Mohammad). One who was blessed by them cannot be equated to them. They are the foundation of religion and pillar of belief. The exaggerator has to turn back to them while the straggler has to catch up with them. They possess the chief characteristics for the caliphate. The executorship and inheritance is theirs. This is the time when right has returned to its owner and been moved back to where it moved from.

However, those who kept away from the Book of God and separated the religion from the Household of Mohammad, and took the caliphate away from its due course, and planted the seeds of vice and disobedience in the hearts of the poor nation, they indeed hid the fact in their vengeful hearts and irrigated it with their everlasting whims and passions until their sown plant turned out to be corrupt and miserable. It is because, in comparison, no one is like the Household of Messenger. Those who stole the blessings of the Messenger and tried recording them for their own benefit are quite different from the Household.

The Household are the main basis of the religion and the pillars of certainty. The exaggerators who have been extravagant in the religion and exceeded the straight path have to return to the course of the Household and follow them. They must adjust their way of living and try to exact themselves to suit the status of the progeny; because the governorship is exclusive to the Household of Mohammad. The endless power and knowledge that God has assigned for them entitles them to be the heirs to the Seal of the Messengers. Now, it is time that right be put in the hands of those who deserve it (implying that the right has been out of its place so far).

He says elsewhere:

فَوَ اللهِ مازِلْتُ مَدْفُوعاً عَنْ حَقّي مُسْتَأْثَراً عَلَيَّ مُنْذُ قَبَضَ اللهُ نَبِيَّهُ صلى الله عليه و آله وسلم حَتّى يَوْمِ النّاسِ هذا.

By God, I have been continually deprived of my right, someone else preferred to me since God took the Prophet (s), with Him until now.[110]

The Sermon of the Master of the Faithful about Not Having Any Friends or Supporters

It is clear from this sermon, which he delivered after the Prophet's death, how lonely he felt when 'Abbās ibn Muṭṭalib and Abū Sufyān went to him to pledge allegiance, as he says:[111]

أَيُّهَا النَّاسُ، شُقُّوا أَمْوَاجَ الْفِتَنِ بِسُفُنِ النَّجَاةِ، وَعَرِّجُوا عَنْ طَرِيقِ الْمُنَافَرَةِ، وَضَعُوا تِيجَانَ الْمُفَاخَرَةِ.
أَفْلَحَ مَنْ نَهَضَ بِجَنَاحٍ، أَوِ اسْتَسْلَمَ فَأَرَاحَ، مَاءٌ آجِنٌ، وَلُقْمَةٌ يَغَصُّ بِهَا آكِلُهَا، وَمُجْتَنِي الثَّمَرَةِ لِغَيْرِ وَقْتِ إِينَاعِهَا كَالزَّارِعِ بِغَيْرِ أَرْضِهِ.
فَإِنْ أَقُلْ يَقُولُوا: حَرَصَ عَلَى الْمُلْكِ، وَإِنْ أَسْكُتْ يَقُولُوا: جَزِعَ مِنَ الْمَوْتِ، هَيْهَاتَ بَعْدَ اللَّتَيَّا وَالَّتِي، وَاللهِ لَابْنُ أَبِي طَالِبٍ آنَسُ بِالْمَوْتِ مِنَ الطِّفْلِ بِثَدْيِ أُمِّهِ، بَلِ انْدَمَجْتُ عَلَى مَكْنُونِ عِلْمٍ لَوْ بُحْتُ بِهِ لَاضْطَرَبْتُمْ اضْطِرَابَ الْأَرْشِيَةِ فِي الطَّوِيِّ الْبَعِيدَةِ.

O, People! Steer clear through the waves of mischief by boats[112] of deliverance; turn away from the path of dissension and put off the crowns of pride. Prosperous is one who rises with wings (i.e. when he has power) or else he remains peaceful and others enjoy ease. It (i.e. aspiring to the caliphate) is like turbid water or like a morsel that would suffocate the person who swallows it. One who plucks fruits before ripening is like one who has cultivated in another's field.

If I spoke out, they would call me greedy for power; but if I kept quiet they would say I was afraid of death. It is a pity after all the ups and downs (I have been through); by God, the son of Abū Ṭālib is more familiar with death than an infant is with the breast of its mother. I have hidden knowledge; if I disclose it to you then you will start trembling like ropes in deep wells.

مثل أهل بيتي فيكم كسفينة نوح، من ركبها نجا، ومن تخلف عنها غرق.

The similitude of my Household is like that of Noah's Ark: Whoever embarks upon it will be saved; whoever lags behind it drowns.

In this sermon, Ali is saying that victory and prosperity are for whoever rises up with the assistance of friends and supporters to get his right, like a bird that soars high on strong wings; otherwise one totally forsakes it because of a lack of supporters and friends; thus, he says:

This caliphate that you are inviting me to and are insisting on pledging allegiance to, even according to the Verses of the Qur'an and the Prophet's instruction, is my right, except for the opposition of Banī Taym and Banī Adi, who pledged allegiance to me immediately after the Prophet's death, but later on put up serious resistance to the Messenger's instructions. They are like polluted water that has lost its freshness and has eventually turned into dirt, or like food contaminated with thistles that tears the throat apart when eaten.

Whoever picks a green fruit from a tree, it is clearly bitter and inedible; it is like a farmer planting his seeds on a stranger's land—then, surely he will not get any benefit of it. My caliphate is the Divine Caliphate, and is based on piety and is the religious Guardianship of the Prophet to guide people, to lead them to the highest spiritual position and a safe, normal life.

If I rise up against these opposition groups, with no supporters on my side to prevail over them, then there will be chaos, sedition, and untimely bloodshed. Above all, it is what the enemy wants. Therefore, if I say, "I would like to take the caliphate," they will say, "He has become greedy for the caliphate," and if I keep quiet, then, they will say, "He is frightened of death." O that! It is not Ali's policy, after all difficulties, disasters, and fighting, to be afraid of war. By God, the son of Abī Ṭālib is more familiar with death than a child is with its mother's breasts. The reason for my not rising against them and taking the caliphate is that I am aware of the Divine secrets, and the knowledge of death and future calamities; they are all mixed up with my essence. If I revealed a tiny piece of them to you, you would shake like a loose rope in surprise—you would not bear listening to me.

His words are an allusion to a sure Divine decree, because God has to test people so that those who follow the law and prophetic sayings on guardianship can be separated from those overcome with desire who turned away from the guardianship, making two distinct groups:

فَرِيقٌ فِي الْجَنَّةِ وَفَرِيقٌ فِي السَّعِيرِ

...a group in Heaven and a group in the blaze. (42:7)

Then, a group of them will remain under the protection of the Household, and the other will be cast into Hell with no blessing.

وَتِلْكَ الْأَيَّامُ نُدَاوِلُهَا بَيْنَ النَّاسِ وَلِيَعْلَمَ اللَّهُ الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا وَيَتَّخِذَ مِنْكُمْ شُهَدَاءَ وَاللَّهُ لَا يُحِبُّ الظَّالِمِينَ وَ لِيُمَحِّصَ اللَّهُ الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا وَيَمْحَقَ الْكَافِرِينَ أَمْ حَسِبْتُمْ أَنْ تَدْخُلُوا الْجَنَّةَ وَلَمَّا يَعْلَمِ اللَّهُ الَّذِينَ جَاهَدُوا مِنْكُمْ وَيَعْلَمَ الصَّابِرِينَ

These are (only) the vicissitudes which We cause to follow one another for mankind, to the end that God may know those who believe and may choose witnesses from among you; and God loves not wrong-doers. And that God may prove those who believe, and may blight the disbelievers. Or deemed ye that ye would enter paradise while yet God knows not those of you who really strive, nor knows those (of you) who are steadfast? (3:140–142)

The only reason that the Master of the Faithful did not rise up against the usurpers was that he did not have any supporters or helpers, as we see him say: "The Prophet said to me: 'O Ali, after my death, if you find enough supporters, rise up against the enemies and take your rights, but if you do not find [enough], then keep quiet and do not struggle or fight.'"[113]

This is exactly what Ali meant when he said: "If after God's Messenger's death, I had forty sincere supporters and followers, I would rise up and fight against the enemies."[114]

Mu'āwiyah wrote in a letter to him,

> O Ali, you are the same man who after the death of the Prophet did not have at least forty close friends and supporters. You are the man to whom my father, Abū Sufyān, came to pledge allegiance but who told him that if he had forty real supporters, he would rebel against his enemies.[115]

Therefore, when they found him forsaken, his supporters—Salmān, Abū Dharr, Miqdād, Zubayr, 'Ammār ibn Yāsir, 'Abbās ibn 'Abd al-Muṭṭalib, Ubayy ibn Ka'b, 'Utbah ibn Abī Lahab, al-Barā' ibn 'Āzib, Sa'd ibn Abī Waqqāṣ, and Ṭalḥah ibn 'Ubaydillāh,[116] all the Hāshimites, and some of the Muhājirīn and Anṣār—took refuge in Fāṭimah's house. They could find no place safer than her house. Later on, Abū Bakr sent 'Umar to make them pledge allegiance, and he was ordered to fight them if they resisted:

فإن ابوا فقاتِلهم

If they resist, then fight them.[117]

They Take the Master of the Faithful to the Mosque by Force to Swear Allegiance

'Umar, along with a mob of followers, went to Fātimah's house. Ibn Abī al-Ḥadīd says:

After attacking Fāṭimah's house, they seized Zūbayr's sword from his hand and broke it with big rocks, and then arrested him and handed him over to Khālid ibn Walīd and his men standing outside by the gate.[118]

ثُمَّ دَخَلَ عُمَرُ فَقَالَ لِعَلِيٍّ: قُمْ فَبَايِعْ فَتَلَكَّأَ وَاحْتَبَسَ، فَأَخَذَ بِيَدِهِ فَقَالَ: قُمْ، فَأَبَى أَنْ يَقُومَ، فَحَمَلَهُ وَدَفَعَهُ كَمَا دَفَعَ الزُّبَيْرَ حَتَّى أَمْسَكَهُمَا خَالِدٌ وَسَاقَهُمَا عُمَرُ وَمَنْ مَعَهُ سَوْقاً عَنِيفاً، وَاجْتَمَعَ النَّاسُ يَنْظُرُونَ وَامْتَلَأَتْ شَوَارِعُ الْمَدِينَةِ بِالرِّجَالِ، وَرَأَتْ فَاطِمَةُ مَا صَنَعَ عُمَرُ فَصَرَخَتْ وَوَلْوَلَتْ وَاجْتَمَعَ مَعَهَا كَثِيرٌ مِنَ الْهَاشِمِيَّاتِ وَغَيْرِهِنَّ فَخَرَجَتْ إِلَى بَابِ حُجْرَتِهَا وَنَادَتْ: يَا أَبَا بَكْرٍ مَا أَسْرَعَ مَا أَغَرْتُمْ عَلَى أَهْلِ بَيْتِ رَسُولِ اللهِ، وَاللهِ لَا أُكَلِّمُ عُمَرَ حَتَّى أَلْقَى اللهَ.[119]

'Umar then entered and told Ali (as): "Get up and pledge allegiance!" He did not take it seriously and resisted. 'Umar took him by his hand and told him, "Get up," but refused to get up. He then picked him up and pushed him as he had done to Zubayr until Khālid held them both and 'Umar violently drove them and those with them. People gathered and the streets of Medina filled with men. Fāṭimah saw what 'Umar had done, screamed and started crying, and many Hāshimite women and others gathered with her, and she went out to the door of her chamber and called out: "O Abū Bakr, how quickly you have attacked God's Messenger's Household of the Prophet! By God, I will not speak to 'Umar until I meet God."

Yes, in that disarray they took Ali (as) to the mosque, and even tied a rope around his neck and dragged him to the mosque to pay homage.

Evidence of this is the fact that one day during 'Uthmān's caliphate the Master of the Faithful was telling a large gathering of people about his own merits and heroic feats. Ṭalḥah ibn 'Ubaydillāh was present and asked: "What should we do about the claim made by Abū Bakr, 'Umar, and his companions who believed him and saw what he said the day they brought you to him with a rope around your neck and they believed the argument you made?"[120]

Another proof is one of the letters that Mu'āwiyah wrote to the Master of the Faithful (as) pointing out: "You are the very man that they dragged to the mosque like a bridled camel to pledge allegiance to Abū Bakr."

A bridled camel is a camel with a horizontal hole made in its nose bone, and a stick pushed through the hole and a rope around both ends of the stick to make the animal tame and obedient.

By recounting his own merits and virtues and pointing out Mu'āwiyah's wrongdoing and misdeeds, Ali replied to his letter superbly:[121]

وَقُلْتَ انِّي كُنْتُ اقَادُ كَمَا يُقَادُ الْجَمَلُ الْمَخْشُوشُ حَتَّى ابَايِعَ، وَلَعَمْرُ اللهِ لَقَدْ اَرَدْتَ اَنْ تَذُمَّ فَمَدَحْتَ وَاَنْ تَفْضَحَ فَافْتَضَحْتَ، وَمَا عَلَى الْمُسْلِمِ مِنْ غَضَاضَةٍ فِي اَنْ يَكُونَ مَظْلُوماً مَالَمْ يَكُنْ شَاكّاً فِي دِينِهِ وَلَا مُرْتَاباً بِيَقِينِهِ وَ هٰذِهِ حُجَّتِي اِلٰى غَيْرِكَ قَصْدُهَا وَلٰكِنِّي اَطْلَقْتُ لَكَ مِنْهَا بِقَدْرِ مَا سَنَحَ مِنْ ذِكْرِهَا.

You have said that I was led like a bridled camel to pledge allegiance. By God, you are trying to criticize me but are actually praising me, and trying to expose me but are actually exposing yourself. There is no shame in a Muslim's being oppressed, provided he has no doubt in his religion or uncertainty in his conviction. This is my argument intended for others. I released to you as much as I deemed necessary to say.[122]

Lessons Twenty-Two to Twenty-Four: On the Infallibility of the Prophets and the Imams, Upon Them Be Peace

LESSONS TWENTY-TWO TO TWENTY-FOUR

In the Name of God, the Merciful, the Compassionate
And may God bless Mohammad and his pure Household, and God's curse on his enemies from now until the Day of Resurrection! And there is no power or strength except through the Lofty, Great God.

The Wise God says in His Glorious Book:

يا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا أَطِيعُوا اللهَ وَأَطِيعُوا الرَّسُولَ وَأُولِي الأَمْرِ مِنكُمْ فَإِن تَنَازَعْتُمْ فِي شَيْءٍ فَرُدُّوهُ إِلَى اللهِ وَالرَّسُولِ إِن كُنتُمْ تُؤْمِنُونَ بِاللهِ وَالْيَوْمِ الآخِرِ ذَلِكَ خَيْرٌ وَأَحْسَنُ تَأْوِيلاً.

O you who believe! Obey God, and obey the Messenger and those of you who are in authority; and if you have a dispute concerning any matter, refer it to God and the Messenger if you are (in truth) believers in God and the Last Day. That is better and more seemly in the end. (4:59)

It is clear from the previous discussions that the verse on *those...in authority* refers exclusively to the Infallible Imams; it cannot be applied to the four Caliphs who ruled immediately after God's Messenger's death, and it is not right to give this title to military commanders or theologians, because none of them is infallible.

None of the Muslims believe that *those...in authority* are infallible except the Shi'a, who believe that the Master of the Faithful and his progeny are.

As stated above, because the verse imposes unqualified and unconditional obedience to *those...in authority*, and links obedience to them to obedience to God's Messenger, they have to be infallible. Thus, this verse cannot be applied to the rulers either, because if obedience to them is mandatory, it is contrary to the fundamentals of the religion and the clear verses of the Holy Qur'an. Certain verses clearly state that obedience to liars and the extravagant, any kind of sins and crimes, and disobedience to God's commands are unlawful. If obedience to them is mandatory, then it contradicts the noble verses. This is why Fakhr Rāzī, in his exegesis, concedes that *those in authority* have to be infallible. However, as he believes that Ali and his progeny were the immediate successors, he says that *those...in authority* means a group of the most learned out of those involved in politics, whose opinions and ideas are collectively infallible.

Of course, in our previous discussions, we proved that this theory was totally invalid, and we explained the flaws in it in detail.

Sunni Challenges to Interpreting "Those...in Authority" as the Infallible Imams

However, they have seven objections to interpreting *those in authority* as the Infallible Imams, all of which are baseless. We shall now proceed to cite each of them in full and then refute them.

The first objection: The blessed verse qualifies *those...in authority* with *of you*, which means that *those...in authority* are of your kind. This clearly means that *those...in authority* are ordinary people just like anyone else, and, just like anyone else, they are believers not marked out by infallibility.

Answer: This reasoning is only sound if, grammatically, the dependent object of the word *minkum* (of you) is what grammarians call a redundant adverb denoting place or time. However, the apparent meaning of the verse indicates that it is a stable adverb denoting place or time, meaning those in authority who are among you.

اولِی الْاَمْرِ کَائِنِیْنَ مِنْکُم.

This just means that *those in authority* are part of the human race, nothing else.

As the Transcendent God says:

هُوَ الَّذِی بَعَثَ فِی الْاُمِّیّٖنَ رَسُولًا مِنْهُم

He is the One Who sent to the Meccans a Messenger from among themselves. (62:2)

Or like the verse about Abraham's prayer:

رَبَّنَا وَابْعَثْ فِیهِمْ رَسُولًا مِنْهُمْ.

Our Lord, raise a Messenger from among them. (2:129)

And like the verse:

رُسُلٌ مِنْکُمْ یَقُصُّونَ عَلَیْکُمْ.

...Messengers, from among yours, narrating to you. (7:35)

As is clear, the verse only means that *those...in authority* are human. Obviously the Infallible Imams are human—they are not angels or anything else.

The second objection is that *those...in authority* is plural, which means that it refers to various people, so the problem with our claim that it means the Infallible Imams is that at any time, only one Imam can be in charge, so the plural has to be interpreted as singular. This is contrary to the literal meaning.

Answer: Using the plural instead of the singular is only contrary to the literal meaning if the plural is used to refer to each one individually. However, the blessed verse does something else. *Those...in authority* refers to all twelve Infallible Imams collectively, and there is nothing wrong with using the plural to refer to all of them collectively. For the use of the plural to be correct, it is not necessary for them all to be actually present at once. Even if they came into being one after the other, the plural broken down into ones would apply to them. It is like saying a pupil has to pass all years. He does not pass them all at once—it happens gradually. This is very common usage. For example, people say: "Obey the chiefs," meaning obey this chief because at any given time there is only one chief. There are many such plurals in the Holy Qur'an.

فَلا تُطِعِ الْمُكَذِّبِينَ.

...so do not obey the deniers. (68:8)

فَلا تُطِعِ الْكافِرِينَ.

...so do not obey the disbelievers. (25:52)

حافِظُوا عَلَى الصَّلَواتِ وَالصَّلوةِ الْوُسْطى.

Take care to perform prayers, especially the middle prayer. (2:238)

اِنّا اَطَعْنا سادَتَنا وَكُبَرائَنا.

...we obeyed our superiors and our great men. (33:67)

وَاخْفِضْ جَنَاحَكَ لِلْمُؤْمِنِينَ.

...and be courteous and supportive to the believers. (15:88)

Obviously one does not perform all the prayers at once, obey all orders given by all chiefs at once, or be courteous and supportive to all believers at once. These kinds of plurals refer to different people at different times; that is, at any given time a single instance is carried out. *Those...in authority* is the same because it breaks down into individuals. Whenever there is one, he has to be obeyed.

The third objection is that if *those...in authority* means the Infallible Imams, obedience to them is contingent upon their being known. If someone does not know them he cannot obey them. This is an imposition of an unbearable responsibility. Because the verse imposes an absolute duty to obey them, it cannot mean the Infallible Imams.

The answer is: This same objection can be made to whoever raises this objection, because even if we considered *those...in authority* to mean those elected by those involved in politics, obedience to them is also contingent upon their being known. There is no difference between considering *those...in authority* to mean the Infallible Imams or others, because either way, performance of an obligation is contingent upon knowing its subject matter; the only difference is that we need God and His Messenger to tell us who the Infallible Imams are, whereas the people take charge of telling us who those involved in politics are.

As *The Study of Legal Presumptions* (*'Ilm al-Usūl*) says, it is not the actual imposition of an obligation that is contingent upon the subject matter being known. Rather, its being activated and communicated is. Imposition of an obligation is not contingent upon it or its subject matter being known [to those upon whom the obligation is imposed]. However, it is not activated; where the person upon whom the obligation is imposed does not know, through no fault of his own, the obligation is not activated. If hypothetically we were to make the actual imposition of the obligation contingent upon it or its subject matter being known [to those upon whom the obligation is imposed], such as ability with regard to *ḥajj* or having water with regard to minor ablutions, there can never be any absolute obligation. Thus, in the noble verse the duty to obey *those...in authority* is absolute. Of course activation of that obligation is contingent upon a person's knowing who they are. If he does not, the obligation is not activated, provided his ignorance is not culpable. In the imposition of most obligations,

communication of the obligation is contingent upon the subject matter's being known to the person upon whom the obligation is imposed, but the actual imposition of the obligation is not.

The fourth objection: After making it mandatory to obey *those...in authority*, God says:

فَإِنْ تَنَازَعْتُمْ فِي شَيْءٍ فَرُدُّوهُ إِلَى اللَّهِ وَالرَّسُولِ

...and if ye have a dispute concerning any matter, refer it to God and the Messenger.

This verse says it is up to God and His Messenger to resolve disputes; if *those...in authority* did mean the Infallible Imams, the verse would impose a duty to refer to them to resolve disputes, because they would decide cases between litigants in accordance with the truth. However, the noble verse does not explicitly refer dispute resolution to them. This proves that they are not infallible, and their opinion on the dispute is not authoritative—so dispute resolution can only be referred to the Book and the Sunnah.

The answer was explained in detail at the beginning of our discussion. The second-person pronoun refers to the believers:

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا أَطِيعُوا اللَّهَ وَأَطِيعُوا الرَّسُولَ وَأُولِي الْأَمْرِ مِنْكُمْ

O you who believe, obey God, and obey the Messenger and those of you who are in authority. (4:59)

This verse makes absolute, unqualified, unconditional obedience to God and the Prophet and *those...in authority* mandatory—obedience to God with regard to all the general rules and bases of laws intended by the Noble Qur'an.

Obedience to the Prophet had two dimensions. The first one is whatever is related to the rules and laws, like explanations of the laws, clarification of the definitions and attributes of the subject matters, and the working out of secondary rulings, the bases of which are explained in God's Book. This is the legislative dimension, which is exclusive to God's Messenger. The second dimension is personal affairs pertaining to public interest, such as the preparation of the army and appointment of military commanders, leaders of the congregational prayer, callers to prayer, and so on, and other non-legislative affairs, but they are dependent on his opinion and judgment. Obedience to the Messenger is mandatory in both.

However, there is only the second dimension to obedience to *those...in authority*, because even though *those...in authority* are the Infallible Imams, they have not brought a new religion. On the contrary, they follow the Prophet's religion itself. That is why they have no part in legislation. Their only task is to explain laws, explain and interpret the meanings of the Qur'an, prepare armies, and consider public interests such as appointing governors, judges, and so on.

Thus obedience to *those...in authority* is only mandatory with regard to personal affairs. Because the noble verse makes the Book and the Messenger's practice the source of law, and *those...in authority* have no part in that, that is why God and His Messenger should be consulted to resolve disputes, whether through consulting *those...in authority* or whoever else knows the Book and Sunnah—obviously if *those...in authority* cannot be consulted and they rule in accordance with the Book and Sunnah, their ruling will also be decisive and will have to be obeyed according to the blessed verse.

Therefore, it is logically obvious why God has commanded man to consult the Book and Sunnah but not *those...in authority*. It is because the Book and Sunnah are the source of law, not because what *those...in authority* say is not authoritative. What they say is authoritative and does resolve disputes, because it is derived from God's Book and God's Messenger's practice.

The best evidence and confirmation of the above is the following verses, which say that referring to or turning to false deities to resolve disputes is unlawful:

أَلَمْ تَرَ إِلَى الَّذِينَ يَزْعُمُونَ أَنَّهُمْ آمَنُوا بِمَا أُنْزِلَ إِلَيْكَ وَمَا أُنْزِلَ مِنْ قَبْلِكَ يُرِيدُونَ أَنْ يَتَحَاكَمُوا إِلَى الطَّاغُوتِ
وَقَدْ أُمِرُوا أَنْ يَكْفُرُوا بِهِ وَيُرِيدُ الشَّيْطَانُ أَنْ يُضِلَّهُمْ ضَلَالًا بَعِيدًا.
وَإِذَا قِيلَ لَهُمْ تَعَالَوْا إِلَى مَا أَنْزَلَ اللَّهُ وَإِلَى الرَّسُولِ رَأَيْتَ الْمُنَافِقِينَ يَصُدُّونَ عَنْكَ صُدُودًا.
وَمَا أَرْسَلْنَا مِنْ رَسُولٍ إِلَّا لِيُطَاعَ بِإِذْنِ اللَّهِ.

Have you not regarded those who claim that they believe in what has been revealed to you and what was revealed before you? They want to litigate before the false deity whom they had been commanded to disbelieve in; but Satan wants to lead them far astray. (4:60) *And when it is said to them, "Come to what God has revealed, and to the Messenger," then you see the hypocrites turn away from you with aversion.* (4:61)

And We did not send any Messenger but to be obeyed by God's leave. (4:64)

These verses declare that it is unlawful to have anyone other than God and His Messenger resolve disputes and misunderstandings, and reproach those turning to oppressive rulers—who resolve people's disputes otherwise than in accordance with God and His Messenger's law. These verses prove that God is just making His Book and His Messenger's practice the sources of law in the verse *those...in authority.* That is why dispute resolution should be referred to them. It is not because what *those...in authority* say—assuming them to be infallible and that they do not transgress the Book or Sunnah—is not authoritative. On the contrary, it is authoritative. It is just that its authoritativeness is hierarchically below the Book's and the Sunnah's, not hierarchically on a level with theirs.

The fifth objection is that the Shi'a say that the benefit of the Infallible Imams is to guide people to the straight path, and to rescue them from disputes, fights, and division. This of course assumes their infallibility, but if *those...in authority* disagree amongst themselves, because they disagree over leadership itself or other matters, they cannot be infallible. That result will not be productive or beneficial. Because the noble verse addresses dispute between people in spite of the presence of *those...in authority* and even when *those...in authority* disagree amongst themselves, and considers the ultimate authority to resolve disputes to be God's Book and His Messenger's practice in every case, it is impossible for them to be infallible if they disagree amongst themselves.

Answer: As explained above, the second-person pronoun in this noble verse refers to the rest of the believers, not *those... in authority*:

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا أَطِيعُوا اللَّهَ وَأَطِيعُوا الرَّسُولَ وَأُولِي الْأَمْرِ مِنكُمْ فَإِن تَنَازَعْتُمْ فِي شَيْءٍ...

O you who believe, obey God, and obey the Messenger and those of you who are in authority; and if you have a dispute concerning any matter... (4:59)

Obviously the imperative enjoining obedience to *those...in authority* is not addressed to *those...in authority* themselves. What follows—*and if you have a dispute concerning any matter, refer it to God and the Messenger*—is second-person address, which follows the earlier address. Because it is joined with a conjunction, those referred to in the second person are the same as those referred to in the second person earlier on, and not *those... in authority.* That is why the disputes referred to are those among the people, but not disputes over matters and rulings passed by the Imams, because it makes no sense to argue over their rulings and

commandments if obedience to them is mandatory. That is inconceivable. Similarly, the disputes referred to are not among *those...in authority* themselves, on account of the fact that the second-person pronoun refers to the other believers, not to them. Moreover, they are infallible and never dispute with each other, so the second person pronoun does not refer to them. Obviously when a dispute erupts, people should refer to the Book and Sunnah, and whoever knows them, whether one of *those...in authority* or someone else, can resolve their dispute. It is similar to the verses that state that the believers have to obey the Prophet, such as:

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا أَطِيعُوا اللَّهَ وَرَسُولَهُ

O you who believe, obey God and His Messenger...

The second-person pronoun refers to the believers with the exception of the Messenger himself. It is exclusive to those instructed to ask him about God and the Messenger's laws, or ask whoever knows them, and then to obey them. The same applies to the verse on *those...in authority*—the second-person pronoun does not refer to them, but instead to other believers who are instructed to ask *those...in authority* or anyone else about the matter or ruling and then act in accordance with God and His Messenger's law.

The sixth objection: We do not currently have and cannot obtain access to the Infallible Imam to learn laws, issues, and interpretation of the Qur'an from him: Because we have no access to him, it cannot be obedience to him that God has made mandatory. Because we know that the noble verse unqualifiedly makes obedience to *those...in authority* mandatory, *those...in authority* cannot be the Infallible Imams.

Answer: After his reappearance everyone will have access to the Imam, as during the other eleven Imams' lifetimes; however, it is the people's fault that the Imam cannot be accessed while he is in hiding—because of their sins, crimes, and acts of treachery, the reward of blessing has been taken away from them. This failure is not God's or His Messenger's—it is like a nation that kills its Messenger and then says it no longer has access to a Messenger to obey; they make excuses, saying: "We cannot meet and benefit from spending time with him." Similarly, when the Imams were present, the people behaved the same way towards them.

They imprisoned Imam Mūsā ibn Ja'far and kept Imam Riḍā under house arrest just like the other Imams. Imam Mohammad Taqi, Imam

Ali al-Naqi, and Imam Hasan Askari were all under house arrest, and people rarely had access to them. So, when people discipline and correct themselves and are virtuous enough to meet him, they will, as is said in his letter to Shaykh Mufid, may God be pleased with him:

وَلَوْ اَنَّ اَشْيَاعَنَا وَفَّقَهُمُ اللهُ لِطَاعَتِهِ عَلَى اجْتِمَاعٍ مِنَ الْقُلُوبِ فِي الْوَفَاءِ بِالْعَهْدِ عَلَيْهِمْ لَمَا تَأَخَّرَ عَنْهُمُ الْيُمْنُ بِلِقَائِنَا، وَلَتَعَجَّلَتْ لَهُمُ السَّعَادَةُ بِمُشَاهَدَتِنَا عَلَى مَعْرِفَةٍ الْحَقِّ وَصِدْقِهَا مِنْهُمْ بِنَا، فَمَا يَحْبِسُنَا عَنْهُمْ اِلَّا مَا يَتَّصِلُ بِنَا مِمَّا نَكْرَهُهُ وَلَا نُؤْثِرُهُ مِنْهُمْ.

> And if God grants our followers the success of obedience to Him, hearts united in keeping to the covenant upon them, the blessing of their meeting us would not be delayed and the happiness of their seeing us would be on account of their knowing the truth and being true to us. However, nothing keeps us away from them except what reaches us of what we hate and do not prefer [issuing] from them.[123]

This is as far as the masses are concerned. As for the elite who strive hard to purify their souls and take firm steps on the straight path, earnestly struggling against their souls' desires, the path to meet the Imam and benefit from his effusion is not blocked. Whoever wants the honor of the Imam's presence must take firm, honest, and right steps on this path.

Furthermore, this objection can be turned right back around at Fakhr Rāzī, because he believes *those...in authority* to mean those involved in politics whose opinions are followed and who should form a single nation in the entire Islamic world. Of course this is not possible, because it is currently not feasible in any shape or form to form a single Islamic nation in the entire Islamic world, based on the theory that those involved in politics are in charge.

The seventh objection: If *those...in authority* means the Infallible Imams, they need to have been clearly introduced by God and His Messenger. If they had been, the whole nation would have turned to them after God's Messenger's death and taken them as their guardian and Master. No two people would have disagreed over them.[124]

The correct response to this objection is that some people's disagreement is not due to the lack of its clarification by God and His Messenger. Many matters have been clearly stated in God's Book and explained in the Prophet's Sunnah, but people have still disagreed over them. Knowing the commands and understanding the facts is one thing, but surrendering hearts to God and His Messenger is another.

A person often knows a subject very well and doubtless becomes familiar with the thing's essence, but because of his desire to lead and his commanding self's dominance and immersion in passivity and desires, and his heart's not being humbled before truths and realities, he turns away from what he knows, not putting it into practice. It is obvious that ambition and greed for status is thousands of times stronger than a man's lust and passion for properties and other pleasures. It is possible for a man outwardly to deprive his passions and lust and refrain from acquiring wealth. However, his ambition and greed for recognition, which is rooted in his mind, heart, and thoughts, will follow him to his grave. It is the last desire to leave even the hearts of the righteous and honest, let alone those who pursue power and love status! It is like a hunter lying in ambush but within man's conscience, launching its attack when the opportunity presents itself. Then, when the time is right, he begins inviting the people to follow him. To reach his own ardent desire, he forsakes everything, even his wife, children, and own property. The only exceptions are those about whom the Purification Verse (*āyat al-taṭhir*) and the Prayer-Duel Verse (*āyat al-mubāhalah*) were revealed and those who consider themselves to be followers of those pure ones, trying to reach the goal through self-control, not transgressing passages of the Book or the Sunnah, not doubting that the Infallible Imams are in charge.

Explicit Statements in the Book of God and the Prophet's Sunnah about the Master of the Faithful's Guardianship

Was not the verse on guardianship revealed about the Master of the Faithful and his pure offspring? As He—Sublime is He—says:

إِنَّمَا وَلِيُّكُمُ اللَّهُ وَرَسُولُهُ وَالَّذِينَ آمَنُوا الَّذِينَ يُقِيمُونَ الصَّلَاةَ وَيُؤْتُونَ الزَّكَاةَ وَهُمْ رَاكِعُونَ.

Your guardian is only God, His Messenger, and those who believe, establish prayer, and give charity while they are bowing. (5:55)

There is no doubt about Sunni and Shi'a consensus that this verse was revealed about the Master of the Faithful;

الْيَوْمَ أَكْمَلْتُ لَكُمْ دِينَكُمْ وَأَتْمَمْتُ عَلَيْكُمْ نِعْمَتِي وَرَضِيتُ لَكُمُ الْإِسْلَامَ دِينًا.

This day have I perfected your religion for you and completed My favor unto you, and have chosen for you Islam as your religion. (5:3)

...and that it was revealed when the Prophet delivered a sermon to the nation at Ghadīr al-Khumm, and said:

اَلَسْتُ اَوْلٰى بِكُمْ مِنْ اَنْفُسِكُمْ؟ قَالُوا: بَلٰى. قَالَ صلى الله عليه و آله وسلم مَنْ كُنْتُ مَوْلاهُ فَهذا عَلِيٌّ مَوْلاهُ.

"Do I not have greater right over you (*awlā bikum*) than you have over yourselves?" They answered: "Yes, you do." He then said: "Whoever's Master I am, this Ali is his Master."

God says in the Verse of Purification:

اِنَّمَا يُرِيدُ اللهُ لِيُذْهِبَ عَنْكُمُ الرِّجْسَ اَهْلَ الْبَيْتِ وَيُطَهِّرَكُمْ تَطْهِيرا.

God only desires to put away any impurity from you, People of the Household, and to purify you. (33:33)

They are the five purified ones: God's Messenger, the Master of the Faithful, Fāṭimah, Ḥasan, and Ḥusayn (God's blessings upon them).

And so is the Ark *Hadith*:

مَثَلُ اَهْلِ بَيْتِي فِيكُمْ كَمَثَلِ سَفِينَةِ نُوحٍ مَنْ رَكِبَهَا نَجَا وَمَنْ تَخَلَّفَ عَنْهَا غَرِقَ.

My Household among you is like Noah's Ark: whoever boards will be saved, but whoever gets left behind it will drown.

The Clan *Hadith* says:

اَيُّكُمْ يُوازِرُنِي عَلٰى اَنْ يَكُونَ اَخِي وَوَزِيرِي وَخَلِيفَتِي مِنْ بَعْدِي؟

Which of you will help me by being my brother, vizier, and caliph after me?

The *Hadith* of the Two Precious Things says:

اِنِّي تارِكٌ فِيكُمُ الثَّقَلَيْنِ كِتابَ اللهِ وَعِتْرَتِي اَهْلَ بَيْتِي، ما اِنْ تَمَسَّكْتُمْ بِهِما لَنْ تَضِلُّوا بَعْدِي اَبَدا.

I am leaving two precious things among you: God's Book and the People of my Household; if you cling to them you will never go astray after I die.[125]

The *Hadith* of the Position:

يا عَلِيُّ انتَ مِنّي بِمَنزِلَةِ هارُونَ مِن مُوسى الّا انَّهُ لا نَبِيَّ بَعدي.

Ali, you are to me as Aaron was to Moses; except that there is no Prophet after me.

The *Hadith* of the Sandal:

انا قاتَلتُ النّاسَ عَلى تَنزيلِ القُرآنِ وَلكِنْ خاصِفُ النَّعلِ يُقاتِلُهُم عَلى تَأويلِهِ. وَكانَ قَدْ اعطى عَلِيّاً نَعلَهُ يَخصِفُها.

I fought people over revelation of the Qur'an, but the sandal cobbler will fight people over its interpretation. He had given his sandal to Ali to cobble, and he was cobbling it.

Further examples are his instructions to his followers to address Ali as Master of the Faithful when greeting him: "Peace be upon you, Master of the Faithful." There are many other *hadiths* in which God's Messenger has explicitly referred, tens or even hundreds of times, to Ali his inheritor, his vizier, his executor, his brother, his own soul, his caliph after him, and the guardian of all the believers in several gatherings and several places. Apart from the above verses and *hadiths*, there are other verses that refer to the Master of the Faithful's status, and other *hadiths* accepted by both the Sunnis and the Shi'a.

All of them have accepted the authenticity of those *hadiths* and unanimously agreed that the *hadiths* are attributable to the Prophet; they are cited in respected history, *hadith*, and exegetical books. Now, are these verses and authentic *hadiths* not enough to prove the Guardianship of Ali and his offspring?

Indeed, if we do not consider these *hadiths* to be explicit proof-texts, then we do not understand the meaning of explicit proof-texts. If Gabriel became a narrator and announced in high Heaven that the Master of the Faithful was God's Messenger's executor, they would still say: "This is not an explicit proof-text." Anyone referring to Sunni books knows that they are full of *hadiths* declaring him to be his executor and God's Messenger's in clear statements—but they still say that God's Messenger did not explicitly state that!

The pagans of the Quraysh would see the manifest verses of the Book and the Prophet's powerful miracles, which left no room for doubt. Nevertheless, they did not concede, because their souls were not ready to accept the truth.

وَمِنْهُمْ مَنْ يَسْتَمِعُ إِلَيْكَ وَجَعَلْنَا عَلَى قُلُوبِهِمْ أَكِنَّةً أَنْ يَفْقَهُوهُ وَفِي آذَانِهِمْ وَقْرًا وَإِنْ يَرَوْا كُلَّ آيَةٍ لَا يُؤْمِنُوا بِهَا حَتَّى إِذَا جَاءُوكَ يُجَادِلُونَكَ يَقُولُ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا إِنْ هَذَا إِلَّا أَسَاطِيرُ الْأَوَّلِينَ.

And of them are some who listen to you, but We have cast veils upon their hearts and made them hard of hearing lest they understand your words; and if they saw any sign, they would not believe in it, to the point that when they come to you, they argue with you; the disbelievers say: "This is nothing but fables of the ancients." (6:25)

He, Transcendent is He, says:

وَإِنْ يَرَوْا كُلَّ آيَةٍ لَا يُؤْمِنُوا بِهَا وَإِنْ يَرَوْا سَبِيلَ الرُّشْدِ لَا يَتَّخِذُوهُ سَبِيلًا وَإِنْ يَرَوْا سَبِيلَ الْغَيِّ يَتَّخِذُوهُ سَبِيلًا ذَلِكَ بِأَنَّهُمْ كَذَّبُوا بِآيَاتِنَا وَكَانُوا عَنْهَا غَافِلِينَ.

...and if they see every sign they will not believe in it; and if they see the way of rectitude, they do not take it for a way, and if they see the way of error, they take it for a way; this is because they rejected Our signs and were heedless of them. (7:146)

وَكَأَيِّنْ مِنْ آيَةٍ فِي السَّمَوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ يَمُرُّونَ عَلَيْهَا وَهُمْ عَنْهَا مُعْرِضُونَ وَمَا يُؤْمِنُ أَكْثَرُهُمْ بِاللَّهِ إِلَّا وَهُمْ مُشْرِكُونَ.

And how many a sign they pass by in the heavens and on the earth, but turn away from! Most of them do not believe in God without attributing partners [to Him]. (12:105–106)

إِنَّ الَّذِينَ حَقَّتْ عَلَيْهِمْ كَلِمَةُ رَبِّكَ لَا يُؤْمِنُونَ وَلَوْ جَاءَتْهُمْ كُلُّ آيَةٍ حَتَّى يَرَوُا الْعَذَابَ الْأَلِيمَ.

Surely those to whom your Lord's word has been confirmed will not believe, even if every sign comes to them, until they see a painful chastisement! (10:96–97)

Whoever considers God's Messenger's behavior towards the Master of the Faithful will doubtless understand that he shares the same attributes. Thus, Ali's caliphate, after the Messenger's death, was as clear as crystal—it was like the bright sun in the clear sky.

Abū Bakr's Acknowledgement of the Master of the Faithful's Superiority

Abū Bakr, 'Umar, and their companions were well aware of the Master of the Faithful's status. It was clear to them what the Prophet had told them—about his being executor, guardian, and caliph; however, they opposed it, and without even telling him, they gathered under the Saqīfah and invited people to pledge allegiance to them.

Ibn Ḥajar al-Haythamī al-Shāfi'ī says:

> Ibn Sammān narrates in his book, known as *al-Muwāfaqah*, on the authority of Ibn 'Abbās:

لَمّا جاءَ ابُو بَكْرٍ وَ عَلِيٌّ لِزِيارَةِ قَبْرِ النَّبِيِّ صلى الله عليه و آله وسلم بَعْدَ وَفاتِهِ بِسِتَّةِ اَيّامٍ، قالَ عَلِيٌّ لِاَبِي بَكْرٍ: تَقَدَّمْ، قالَ اَبُو بَكْرٍ: لا اَتَقَدَّمُ رَجُلًا سَمِعتُ رَسُولَ اللهِ صلى الله عليه و آله وسلم يَقُولُ فِيهِ: عَلِيٌّ مِنِّي كَمَنْزِلَتِي مِنْ رَبِّي.

> When Abū Bakr and Ali went to visit the Prophet's (s) grave six days after his death, Ali said to Abū Bakr, "Go ahead," but Abū Bakr replied: "I will not put even so much as a foot ahead. I heard God's Messenger (s) say about him: 'Ali is to me as I am (*ka manzilati*) to my Lord.'"[126]

Muḥib al-Dīn Aḥmad ibn 'Abdullāh Ṭabarī narrates this *hadith* in his two books: *al-Riyāḍ al-Naḍrah* (vol. 2, p. 163) and *Dhakhā'ir al-'Uqbā* (p. 64) but in these words: "Ali to me is what I am (*bi manzilatī*) to God."

And Muwaffaq ibn Ahmad Khārazmī narrates via his chains from Sha'bi:

قالَ: نَظَرَ اَبُو بَكْرٍ اِلى عَلِيِّ بْنِ اَبِي طالِبٍ مُقْبِلًا فَقالَ: مَنْ سَرَّهُ اَنْ يَنْظُرَ اِلى اَقْرَبِ النّاسِ مِنْ رَسُولِ اللهِ صلى الله عليه و آله وسلم وَاجْدَرِهِمْ مَنْزِلَةً وَاَعْظَمِهِمْ عِنْدَ اللهِ غَناءً وَاعْظَمِهِمْ عَلَيْهِ فَلْيَنْظُرْ اِلى هذا ـ وَاشارَ اِلى عَلِيِّ بْنِ اَبِي طالِبٍ ـ لِاَنِّي سَمِعتُ رَسُولَ اللهِ صلى الله عليه و آله وسلم يَقُولُ: اِنَّهُ لَرَؤُوفٌ بِالنّاسِ وَاَنَّهُ لَاَوّاهٌ حَلِيمٌ.

Sha'bi says:

> While Ali ibn Abī Ṭālib was approaching, Abū Bakr looked at him and said to the gathering: "Whoever wants to see the closest person and highest ranking relative to God's Messenger (s), and also the

greatest and dearest in God's sight, should look at this man." He then pointed to Ali ibn Abī Ṭālib and said: "That is because I heard the Prophet say, 'Ali ibn Abī Ṭālib is very kind to the people, and ever so tender-hearted and forbearing.'"[127]

Without relying on the Prophet's words as evidence, Muḥib al-Dīn Aḥmad ibn 'Abdullāh Ṭabarī also narrates this entire *hadith* in *al-Riyāḍ al-Naḍrah* (vol. 2, p. 163).

Shaykh Sulaymān Qundūzī narrates from *Mawaddah al-Qurbā*, via its unbroken chain of transmission on the authority of 'Abdullāh ibn 'Umar:

انَّ رَسُولَ اللهِ صلى الله عليه و آله وسلم قالَ: خَيْرُ رِجالِكُمْ عَلِيُّ بْنُ ابى طالِبٍ، وَ خَيْرُ شَبابِكُمُ الْحَسَنُ وَ الْحُسَيْنُ، وَ خَيْرُ نِسائِكُمْ فاطِمَةُ بِنْتُ مُحَمَّدٍ عَلَيْهِ الصَّلاةُ وَ السَّلامُ.

"God's Messenger (s) stated: 'The best man among you is Ali ibn Abī Ṭālib, and the best woman among you is Mohammad's daughter, Fāṭimah; and the best youths of you are Ḥasan and Ḥusayn.'"[128]

And it is narrated from 'Abdullāh ibn 'Umar, who said:

قالَ: كُنّا اذا اعْدَدْنا اصْحابَ النَّبِيِّ صلى الله عليه و آله وسلم قُلْنا: ابُو بَكْرٍ وَ عُمَرُ وَ عُثْمانُ. فَقالَ رَجُلٌ: يا ابا عَبْدِ الرَّحْمنِ فَعَلِيٌّ ما هُوَ؟ قالَ: عَلِيٌّ مِنْ اهْلِ بَيْتٍ لا يُقاسُ بِهِ احَدٌ، هُوَ مَعَ رَسُولِ اللهِ صلى الله عليه و آله و سلم فى دَرَجَتِهِ. انَّ اللهَ يَقُولُ: «الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا وَ اتَّبَعَتْهُمْ ذُرِّيَّتُهُمْ بِإِيمانٍ الْحَقْنا فاطِمَةُ مَعَ رَسُولِ اللهِ صلى الله عليه و آله وسلم فى دَرَجَتِهِ وَ عَلِيٌّ مَعَهُما.

He said: "Whenever we counted the Companions of the Prophet we kept just saying: Abū Bakr, 'Umar, and 'Uthmān. A man then said: "O Abū 'Abd al-Raḥmān, what about Ali?" Ibn 'Umar answered him:

> Ali belongs to a household to whom no one on earth compares. He is with God's Messenger on his level. God says: *And they who believe and whose offspring follow them in faith, We cause their offspring to join them.* (52:21) Therefore, Fāṭimah is with God's Messenger at his level and Ali is with them.[129]

This *hadith* narrated by Ibn 'Umar is similar to many other prophetic *hadiths* reported by both Sunni and Shi'a scholars: "Ali belongs to a family such that no one is comparable to him on the earth. Ali is at the level of the Prophet and he is with him."

On page 17 of *Dhakhā'ir al-'Uqbā*, it is related by Anas ibn Mālik:

قال رسول اللهِ: نحن اهل بيتٍ لا يقاس بنا احدٌ

God's Messenger said: We are a household to whom no one compares.

Yanābī' al-Mawaddah says on page 253, after relating this *hadith*:

Ahmad ibn Muhammad Kurzuri Baghdadi said:

> I asked Ahmad ibn Hanbal who the best companions were. He answered: "They are Abū Bakr, 'Umar, and 'Uthmān," and fell silent. I asked: "Where is Ali ibn Abī Ṭālib?"
>
> قالَ: هُوَ مِن اهلِ بَيتٍ لا يُقاسُ بِهِ هؤلآء
>
> He answered: He is from a household to whom those cannot compare.

It is also narrated in *Kanz al-'Ummāl* (vol. 6, p. 218), from Daylamī's *Ferdaus al-Akhbār*:

قال: نحن اهل بيتٍ لا يقس بنا احدٌ

He said: We are a household to whom no one compares.

And similarly, 'Ubaydullah Ḥanafi cites this *hadith* on page 330 of his book, *Arjaḥ al-Maṭālib*, from Ibn Mardawayh's *Manāqib* and also says:

قالَ: عَلِيٌّ عليه السلام عَلَى المِنبَرِ: نَحنُ اهلُ بَيتِ رَسُولِ اللهِ صلى الله عليه و آله وسلم، لا يُقاسُ بِنا احَد

Ali (as) stated on the pulpit: We are God's Messenger's (s) Household. No one compares to us.

In the second sermon of *Nahj al-Balāghah*, he said:

لا يُقاسُ بِآلِ مُحَمَدٍ صلى الله عليه و آله وسلم مِن هذِهِ الأمَةِ احَد

No one out of this nation compares to Mohammad's (s) Family.[130]

Khārazmī Ḥanafi narrates via his chain of narration on the authority of the Prophet:

خير من يمشي على الارض بعدي علي بن أبي طالب.

After me, the best who walks on the earth is Ali ibn Abī Ṭālib.[131]

All these are *hadiths* narrated by Abū Bakr, 'Ā'ishah, and 'Abdullāh ibn 'Umar on the virtue of the Master of the Faithful. Apart from these, there are many *hadiths* narrated by 'Umar and 'Abdullāh ibn 'Umar about the Prophet's making the Master of the Faithful his brother.

The Prophet's Making of the Master of the Faithful His Brother

Muḥib al-Dīn Ṭabarī says:

عَنِ ابْنِ عُمَرَ قَالَ: آخى رَسُولُ اللهِ صلى الله عليه و آله وسلم بَيْنَ اصْحابِهِ فَجاءَ عَلِيٌّ تَدْمَعُ عَيْناهُ فَقالَ: يا رَسُولَ اللهِ آخَيْتَ بَيْنَ اصْحابِكَ وَلَمْ تُواخِ بَيْنِي وَبَيْنَ احَدٍ؟ قالَ لَهُ رَسُولُ اللهِ صلى الله عليه و آله وسلم: انْتَ اخي فِي الدُّنيا وَالآخِرَةِ.

'Abdullāh ibn 'Umar [says]:

> The Prophet (s) made his companions brothers to each other and Ali. His eyes filled with tears, and he came to him and said: God's Messenger, you have made your companions brothers to each other but you have not made me anyone's brother. God's Messenger replied: You are my brother in this world and the Hereafter.[132]

After relating this *hadith*, Muḥib al-Dīn Ṭabarī says: "Tirmidhi relates this *hadith* via his chain, and says: 'It is a good (*ḥasan*) *hadith*. Baghawi also cites it in *Maṣābih* [*al-Sunnah*], categorizing it as good (*min al-ahādith al-ḥasan*).'"

Another *hadith*, cited by Imam Ahmad ibn Ḥanbal says:

انَّ النَّبِيَّ صلى الله عليه و آله وسلم قالَ لَهُ لَمّا قالَ: آخَيْتَ بَيْنَ اصْحابِكَ وَتَرَكْتَنِي؟ قالَ: وَلَمْ تَرَانِي تَرَكْتُكَ؟ انَّما تَرَكْتُكَ لِنَفْسِي، انْتَ اخي وَانَا اخُوكَ.

When he said: 'You have made your companions brothers to each other but left me out,' God's Messenger replied: 'Why do you think I have left you out? I have left you for myself. You are my brother and I am your brother.'

وَعَنْ عَلِيٍّ عليه السلام قَالَ: طَلَبَنِي النَّبِيُّ صلى الله عليه و آله وسلم فَوَجَدَنِي فِي حائِطٍ نائِماً فَضَرَبَنِي بِرِجْلِهِ وَ قَالَ: قُمْ فَوَاللهِ لَأَرْضِيَنَّكَ، انْتَ اخِي وَابُو وُلْدِي، تُقاتِلُ عَلى سُنَّتِي، مَنْ ماتَ عَلى عَهْدِي فَهُوَ فِي كَنْزِ الْجَنَّةِ، وَ مَنْ ماتَ عَلى عَهْدِكَ فَقَدْ قَضى نَحْبَهُ، وَمَنْ ماتَ عَلى دِينِكَ بَعْدَ مَوْتِكَ خَتَمَ اللهُ لَهُ بِالْأَمْنِ وَ الْإِيمانِ ما طَلَعَتْ شَمْسٌ اوْ غَرَبَتْ.

Ali (as) said:

> The Prophet was looking for me and found me sleeping in a garden. He nudged me with his foot and said:
>
> > O Ali, get up, by God, surely I am content with you as my brother and the father of my offspring; you will fight for my tradition. Whoever dies in my covenant will go to Heaven's treasure. Whoever dies in your covenant fulfills his pledge. God will make the end of whoever dies following your religion after your death, safety and faithfully as long as the sun rises and sets.[133]

وَعَنْ جابِرِ بْنِ عَبْدِ اللهِ الْانْصارِيِّ قَالَ: عَلى بابِ الْجَنَّةِ مَكْتُوبٌ: لا اِلهَ اِلَّا اللهُ، مُحَمَّدٌ رَسُولُ اللهِ، عَلِيٌّ اخُو رَسُولِ اللهِ. وَفِي رِوايَةٍ: مَكْتُوبٌ عَلى بابِ الْجَنَّةِ: مُحَمَّدٌ رَسُولُ اللهِ، عَلِيٌّ اخُو رَسُولِ اللهِ، قَبْلَ انْ تُخْلَقَ السَّماواتُ وَالْارْضُ بِالْفَيْ سَنَةٍ (اخْرَجَهُما احْمَدُ فِي الْمَناقِبِ).[134]

Ahmad ibn Ḥanbal narrates via his chain, on the authority of Jābir ibn 'Abdullāh al-Anṣārī that God's Messenger said: Written on Heaven's gate is: 'There is no deity except God. Mohammad is God's Messenger. Ali is God's Messenger's brother.' Another narration says: Mohammad has been God's Messenger, [and] Ali God's Messenger's brother since two thousand years before the creation of the heavens and the earth (cited by Ahmad in *al-Manāqib*).[135]

Ibn Kathīr says:

وَ آخاهُ رَسُولُ اللهِ صلى الله عليه و آله وسلم مَرَّتَيْنِ، فَانَّ رَسُولَ اللهِ آخى بَيْنَ الْمُهاجِرِينَ ثُمَّ آخى بَيْنَ الْمُهاجِرِينَ وَالْانْصارِ بَعْدَ الْهِجْرَةِ وَقَالَ لِعَلِيٍّ فِي كُلٍّ واحِدٍ مِنْهُما: انْتَ اخِي فِي الدُّنْيا وَالْآخِرَةِ.

God's Messenger (s) made him his brother twice because God's Messenger made the migrants brothers to each other, and then made the migrants brothers to the supporters after the flight. He said to Ali both times: "You are my brother in this world and the Hereafter."[136]

Qundūzī Ḥanafī cites Ahmad ibn Ḥanbal's *Musnad* via an unbroken chain of transmission on the authority of Makhdūj ibn Zayd al-Hudhalī:

قَالَ: انَّ رَسُولَ اللهِ صلى الله عليه و آله وسلم آخى بَيْنَ الْمُسْلِمِينَ ثُمَّ قَالَ: يا عَلِيُّ انْتَ اخى وَانَا مِنْكَ بِمَنْزِلَةِ هارُونَ مِنْ مُوسى الّا انَّهُ لَا نَبِيَّ بَعْدى ـ الى انْ قَالَ صلى الله عليه و آله وسلم: ـ ثُمَّ يُنادى الْمُنادى مِنْ عِنْدِ الْعَرْشِ: نِعْمَ الْأَبُ ابُوكَ ابْراهِيمُ، وَنِعْمَ الْأَخُ اخُوكَ عَلِى.

God's Messenger (s) made the Muslims brothers to each other and then stated: Ali, you are my brother, and you are to me as Aaron was to Moses except that there is no Prophet after me. God's Messenger (s) said: The caller will call from by the Throne: "What a good forefather your forefather Abraham, is and what a good brother your brother Ali is!"[137]

He also says:

On the Day of the Council, Ali (as) said to the members of the council:

انْشُدُكُمْ بِاللهِ... هَلْ تَعْلَمُونَ... انَّ رَسُولَ اللهِ قَالَ بَعْدَ ما رَجَعَ مِنَ السَّماءِ لَيْلَةَ اسْرِىَ بِهِ: فَلَمّا رَجَعْتُ مِنْ عِنْدِهِ نادى مُنادٍ مِنْ وَراءِ الْحُجُبِ: نِعْمَ الْأَبُ ابُوكَ ابْراهِيمُ، وَنِعْمَ الْأَخُ اخُوكَ عَلِيٌّ، وَاسْتَوْصى بِهِ؟ قالُوا: نَعَم.

I implore you by God, do you know that when the Prophet returned from Heaven the night he was taken on the journey he said: When I returned from His Presence, a caller called from behind the veils said: 'What a good forefather your forefather Abraham is, and what a good brother your brother Ali is!' and he followed that recommendation?

They replied: "Yes."[138]

Moreover, Ibn al-Ṣabbāgh al-Mālikī narrates from Ḍiyā' al-Dīn Khārazmī on the authority of 'Abbās:

قَالَ: لَمّا آخى رَسُولُ اللهِ بَيْنَ اصْحابِهِ مِنَ الْمُهاجِرِينَ وَالْأَنْصارِ وَهُوَ انَّهُ آخى بَيْنَ ابى بَكْرٍ وَعُمَرَ، وَ آخى بَيْنَ عُثْمانَ وَعَبْدِ الرَّحْمنِ بْنِ عَوْفٍ، وَ آخى بَيْنَ طَلْحَةَ وَالزُّبَيْرِ، وَ آخى بَيْنَ ابى ذَرٍّ الْغِفارِىِّ وَالْمِقْدادِ وَلَمْ يُواخِ بَيْنَ عَلِيِّ بْنِ ابى طالِبٍ وَبَيْنَ احَدٍ مِنْهُمْ خَرَجَ عَلِيٌّ مُغْضَباً حَتّى اتى جَدْوَلًا مِنَ الْأَرْضِ وَتَوَسَّدَ ذِراعَهُ وَنامَ فِيهِ، تَسْفِى الرِّيحُ عَلَيْهِ، فَطَلَبَهُ النَّبِيُّ فَوَجَدَهُ عَلى تِلْكَ الصِّفَةِ فَوَكَزَهُ بِرِجْلِهِ وَقالَ لَهُ: قُمْ فَما صَلَحَتْ الّا انْ تَكُونَ اباتُرابٍ، اغْضِبْتَ حِينَ آخَيْتُ بَيْنَ الْمُهاجِرِينَ وَالْأَنْصارِ وَلَمْ اواخِ بَيْنَكَ وَبَيْنَ احَدٍ مِنْهُمْ؟ اما تَرْضى انْ تَكُونَ مِنِّى بِمَنْزِلَةِ هارُونَ مِنْ مُوسى الّا انَّهُ لا نَبِيَّ بَعْدى. الا مَنْ احَبَّكَ فَقَدْ حُفَّ بِالْأَمْنِ وَالْإِيمانِ، وَمَنْ ابْغَضَكَ اماتَهُ اللهُ مِيتَةً جاهِلِيَّةً.

When God's Messenger made his migrant and supporter companions brothers to each other, Abū Bakr to 'Umar, and 'Uthmān to 'Abd al-Raḥmān ibn 'Awf, Ṭalḥah to Zubayr and Abū Dharr al-Ghifārī to Miqdād, he did not make Ali a brother to any of them. Ali set off angrily, eventually lying down on the ground, using his arm as a pillow and falling asleep, the wind scattering dust onto him. The Prophet went looking for him, found him like that, and nudged him with his foot. He said:

> Get up, are you not happy unless you are Abū Turāb (dusty)? Did you become angry when I made the migrants and supporters brothers to each other but did not make you anyone's brother? Are you not content to be to me as Aaron was to Moses except that there is no Prophet after me? Lo! Whoever loves you will be surrounded by safety, but God will make whoever hates you die a death of [the days of] ignorance.[139]

Ibn al-Maghāzilī al-Shāfi'ī also narrates via his chain on the authority of Zayd ibn Arqam:

قَالَ: دَخَلْتُ عَلى رَسُولِ اللهِ، قَالَ: انِّي مُواخٍ بَيْنَكُمْ كَمَا آخَى اللهُ بَيْنَ الْمَلائِكَةِ، ثُمَّ قَالَ لِعَلِيٍّ: انْتَ اخي وَرَفِيقي، ثُمَّ تَلا هذِهِ الآيَةَ: «اخْواناً عَلى سُرُرٍ مُتَقابِلِينَ» الأَخِلَّاءُ فِي اللهِ يَنْظُرُ بَعْضُهُمْ الى بَعْض.

I went to see God's Messenger. He said: Surely I am making you brothers to each other as God has made the angels brothers to each other. He then said to Ali: You are my brother and companion. Then, he recited this verse: *Brothers facing each other on couches.* (15:47) Bosom friends for the sake of God will be looking at each other.[140]

He also narrates on the authority of Ḥudhayfah ibn al-Yamān:

قَالَ: آخى رَسُولُ اللهِ بَيْنَ الْمُهاجِرِينَ وَالأَنْصارِ، كانَ يُواخي بَيْنَ الرَّجُلِ وَنَظيرِهِ، ثُمَّ اخَذَ بِيَدِ عَلِيِّ بْنِ ابي طالِبٍ فَقالَ: هذا اخي. قالَ حُذَيْفَةُ: فَرَسُولُ اللهِ سَيِّدُ الْمُرْسَلينَ وَامامُ الْمُتَّقينَ وَرَسُولُ رَبِّ الْعالَمينَ الَّذي لَيْسَ لَهُ شِبْهٌ وَلا نَظيرٌ، وَعَلِيٌّ اخُوه.

God's Messenger made the migrants and supporters brothers to each other, making each man a brother to his equal. He then took Ali ibn Abī Ṭālib and stated: 'This is my brother.' Ḥudhayfah says: And God's Messenger is the Master of the envoys, the Imam of the God-fearing and the Messenger of the Lord of all worlds—who has no like and no equal—and Ali is his brother.[141]

This means that Ali's attributes are similar to the Prophet's, as brotherhood requires.

Similarly, 'Abdullāh ibn Ahmad ibn Hanbal, Muwaffaq ibn Ahmad Khārazmī,[142] and Ḥamwīnī all narrate via unbroken chains[143] on the authority of Zayd ibn Arqam, and Ḥamwīnī also narrates a slightly different wording on the authority of Zayd ibn Arqam:

قالَ: دَخَلْتُ عَلى رَسُولِ اللهِ مَسْجِدَهُ فَقالَ: اينَ فُلانِ بْنُ فُلانٍ، فَجَعَلَ يَنْظُرُ فى وُجُوهِ اصْحابِهِ وَيَتَفَقَّدُهُمْ وَيَبْعَثُ اليْهِمْ حَتّى تَواقَفُوا عِنْدَهُ، فَحَمِدَ اللهَ وَاثْنى عَلَيْهِ، وَ آخى بَيْنَهُمْ.. وَذَكَرَ حَدِيثَ الْمُواخاةِ بَيْنَهُمْ. فَقالَ عَلِيٌّ عليه السلام: لَقَدْ ذَهَبَ رُوحى وَانْقَطَعَ ظَهْرى حينَ رَاَيْتُكَ فَعَلْتَ بِاصْحابِكَ ما فَعَلْتَ غَيْرى، فَاِنْ كانَ هذا عَنْ سَخَطٍ عَلَيَّ فَلَكَ الْعُتْبى وَالْكَرامَةُ. فَقالَ رَسُولُ اللهِ: وَالَّذى بَعَثَنى بِالْحَقِّ ما اخَّرْتُكَ اِلّا لِنَفْسى، وَاَنْتَ مِنّى بِمَنْزِلَةِ هارُونَ مِنْ مُوسى غَيْرَ اَنَّهُ لا نَبِيَّ بَعْدى، وَاَنْتَ اخى وَوارِثى. قالَ: وَما ارِثُ يا رَسُولَ اللهِ؟ قالَ: ما وَرِثَ الْاَنْبِياءُ مِنْ قَبْلى. قالَ: وَما وَرِثَ الْاَنْبِياءُ مِنْ قَبْلِكَ؟ قالَ: كِتابَ اللهِ وَسُنَّةَ نَبِيِّهِ. وَاَنْتَ مَعى فِى قَصْرى فِى الْجَنَّةِ مَعَ ابْنَتى فاطِمَةَ، وَاَنْتَ اخى وَرَفيقى، ثُمَّ تَلا رَسُولُ اللهِ: «اِخْواناً عَلى سُرُرٍ مُتَقابِلينَ» الْمُتَحابُّونَ فِى اللهِ يَنْظُرُ بَعْضُهُمْ اِلى بَعْضٍ.

Thus, Zayd ibn Arqam says:

> I went to see God's Messenger in his mosque and he asked: Where is So-and-So? Then, he began looking at his companions' faces, checking if any were missing and sending for them until they were all present. He then praised and glorified God. [Zayd] then cited the *hadith* about making [them each other's] brothers.
>
> Ali (as) then said: My spirit was gone and my back broken when I saw you do what you did with all your companions apart from me; if that is out of anger, you will be pleased and honored.
>
> God's Messenger replied: By Him Who sent me with truth, I only left you out for myself. You are to me as Aaron was to Moses except that there is no Prophet after me. You are my brother and heir.
>
> He asked: What will I inherit, God's Messenger?
>
> He replied: What the Prophets before me inherited.
>
> He asked: What did the Prophets before you inherit?
>
> He replied: God's Book and His Prophet's tradition. You will be with me in my palace in Heaven with my daughter Fāṭimah. You are my brother and companion.
>
> God's Messenger then recited: *Brothers facing each other on couches.* (15:47) Those who love each other for God's sake will be looking at each other.

The author of *al-Ferdaus* narrates via his chain of narration on the authority of Abū Dharr:

اسْنَدَ ظَهْرَهُ اِلَى الْكَعْبَةِ فَقَالَ: اَيُّهَا النَّاسُ هَلُمُّوا احَدِّثْكُمْ عَنْ نَبِيِّكُمْ. سَمِعْتُ رَسُولَ اللهِ يَقُولُ لِعَلِيٍّ عليه السلام: اَللّٰهُمَّ اغْفِرْهُ وَاسْتَغْفِرْ بِهِ، اَللّٰهُمَّ انْصُرْهُ وَانْتَصِرْ بِهِ فَاِنَّهُ عَبْدُكَ وَاخُو رَسُولِكَ.

He rested his back against the Ka'bah and said: People! Quickly! I will narrate to you on the authority of your Prophet. I heard God's Messenger say for Ali (as): "O God, forgive him, and forgive through him. O God, help him, and help through him, for he is Your servant and Your Messenger's brother."[144]

And Ibn Abī al-Ḥadīd narrates on the authority of Abū Rāfi':

اَتَيْتُ اباذَرٍّ بِالرَّبَذَةِ اوَدِّعُهُ فَلَمَّا ارَدْتُ الْانْصِرافَ قالَ لِي وَلِاناسٍ مَعِي: سَتَكُونُ فِتْنَةٌ فَاتَّقُوا اللهَ وَعَلَيْكَ بِالشَّيْخِ عَلِيِّ بْنِ ابِي طالِبٍ فَاتَّبِعُوهُ فَاِنِّي سَمِعْتُ رَسُولَ اللهِ يَقُولُ لَهُ: اَنْتَ اوَّلُ مَنْ آمَنَ بِي وَاوَّلُ مَنْ يُصافِحُنِي يَوْمَ الْقِيامَةِ، وَاَنْتَ الصِّدِّيقُ الْاكْبَرُ وَالْفارُوقُ الَّذِي يُفَرِّقُ بَيْنَ الْحَقِّ وَالْباطِلِ، وَاَنْتَ يَعْسُوبُ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ وَالْمالُ يَعْسُوبُ الْكافِرِينَ، وَاَنْتَ اخِي وَوَزِيرِي وَخَيْرُ مَنْ اتْرُكُ بَعْدِي تَقْضِي دَيْنِي وَتُنْجِزُ مَوْعِدِي.

I went to Rabadhah to bid Abū Dharr farewell. When I wanted to leave, he said to me and to people with me: There will be strife, so fear God, take care of the chief Ali ibn Abī Ṭālib (as) and follow him, because I heard God's Messenger say to him:

> You were the first to believe in me and will be the first to shake my hand on the Day of Resurrection. You are the greatest righteous one (*al-ṣiddīq al-akbar*), and the separator (*al-farūq*) who separates the truth from falsehood; you are the Muslims' chief and money is the unbelievers' chief. You are my brother, my vizier, and the best I shall leave behind me. You will pay my debts and fulfill my promises.[145]

And also, in *Sharḥ Nahj al-Balāghah*, Ibn Abī al-Ḥadīd has related from Hakīm ibn Jubayr:

قالَ: خَطَبَ عَلِيٌّ عليه السلام فَقالَ فِي اثناءِ خُطبَتِهِ: انَا عَبدُ اللهِ وَاخُو رَسُولِهِ لا يَقُولُها احَدٌ قَبلِي وَلا بَعدِي الا كَذّابٌ، وَرِثتُ نَبِيَّ الرَّحمَةِ وَنَكَحتُ سَيِّدَةَ نِساءِ هذِهِ الأُمَّةِ، وَانَا خاتَمُ الوَصِيِّينَ. وَقالَ رَجُلٌ مِن عَنس: مَن لا يُحسِنُ انْ يَقُولَ مِثلَ هذا؟ فَلَم يَرجِع الى اهلِهِ حَتّى جُنَّ وَصُرِعَ، فَسُألُوهُم هَل رَاَيتُم بِهِ قَبلَ هذا، قالُوا: ما رَاَينا بِهِ قَبلَ هذا عَرَضاً.

Ali (as) was giving a sermon. He said in his sermon: I am God's servant and His Messenger's brother. No one before me or after me can say that unless he is a liar. I have inherited from the Prophet of Mercy and married the chief lady of this nation, and I am the seal of the executors.

A man from 'Ans said: Who can say something like this?

No sooner did he return to his family, he went mad and had an epileptic fit! Later on, his family was asked if they had seen anything wrong with him before, but they answered: We have never seen him show any symptom before.[146]

Shaykh al-Islam Ḥamwīnī narrates this story with minor differences from Zayd ibn Wahhāb. Ahmad ibn Ḥanbal also narrates in his *Musnad* from 'Umar ibn 'Abdullāh from his father from his grandfather:

انَّ النَّبِيَّ آخى بَينَ النّاسِ وَتَرَكَ عَلِيّاً حَتّى آخِرِهِم لا يَرى لَهُ اخاً. فَقالَ: يا رَسُولَ اللهِ! آخَيتَ بَينَ النّاسِ وَتَرَكتَنِي؟ قالَ: وَلَمْ تَرَانِي تَرَكتُكَ؟ وَانَّما تَرَكتُكَ لِنَفسِي، انتَ اخِي وَانَا اخُوكَ، فَانْ فاخَرَكَ احَدٌ فَقُلْ: انَا عَبدُ اللهِ وَاخُو رَسُولِ اللهِ، لا يَدَّعِيها بَعدَكَ الا كَذّاب.

The Prophet made the people brothers to each other, but left Ali till last. No brother could be seen for him. He said: You have made the people brothers to each other but left me out. He replied: For whom do you think I have left you? I have left you for myself. You are my brother and I am your brother. If anyone vies with you, tell him: 'I am God's servant and God's Messenger's brother.' No one but you can claim this unless he is a liar.

And Ibn al-Maghāzilī Abū al-Hasan, the jurist, relates, via his chain, that Anas said, after telling the story of how the companions were made brothers to each other and mentioning the Master of the Faithful's being upset by God's Messenger's not bearing him in mind:

قَالَ رسول الله صلى الله عليه و آله وسلم: أَمَا ذَخَرْتُكَ لِنَفْسِي، الا يَسُرُّكَ انْ تَكُونَ اخَا نَبِيِّكَ؟ قَالَ: بَلَى يا رَسُولَ اللهِ انِّي لِي بِذلِكَ؟ فَاخَذَ بِيَدِهِ وَارْقَاهُ الْمِنْبَرَ فَقَالَ: اللّٰهُمَّ هذا مِنِّي وَانَا مِنْهُ، الا انَّهُ مِنِّي بِمَنْزِلَةِ هارُونَ مِنْ مُوسى، الا مَنْ كُنْتُ مَوْلاهُ فَهذا عَلِيٌّ مَوْلاهُ. قَالَ: فَانْصَرَفَ عَلِيٌّ عليه السلام قَرِيرَ الْعَيْنِ فَاتْبَعَهُ عُمَرُ بْنُ الْخَطّابِ فَقَالَ: بَخٍ بَخٍ يا اباالْحَسَنِ اصْبَحْتَ مَوْلاىَ وَمَوْلى كُلِّ مُسْلِمٍ.

God's Messenger (s) said: I have kept you for me. Are you not happy to be your Prophet's brother? He said: Yes, of course, God's Messenger. How can I not be? The Prophet took him by his hand and lifted him to the pulpit. He then said: O God, this [man] is of me and I am of him. Lo! He is to me as Aaron was to Moses. Lo! Whoever's Master I am, Ali is [also] his Master.[147]

[Anas] says: Ali then went away delighted. 'Umar followed him and said: 'Bravo, Bravo, Abū al-Hasan! You have become my Master and the Master of every Muslim.'

'Abdullāh ibn Ahmad ibn Ḥanbal narrates via his chain on the authority of Ali:

قَالَ: جَمَعَ رَسُولُ اللهِ (اوْ دَعا رَسُولُ اللهِ) بَنِي عَبْدِ الْمُطَّلِبِ فِيهِمْ رَهْطٌ كُلُّهُمْ يَأْكُلُ الْجَذَعَةَ وَيَشْرَبُ الْفَرَقَ. قَالَ: فَصَنَعَ لَهُمْ مُدّاً مِنْ طَعامٍ فَاكَلُوا حَتّى شَبِعُوا. قَالَ: وَبَقِيَ الطَّعامُ كَما هُوَ كَانَّهُ لَمْ يُمَسَّ، ثُمَّ دَعا بِغُمَرٍ فَشَرِبُوا حَتّى رَوُوا وَبَقِيَ الشَّرابُ كَانَّهُ لَمْ يُمَسَّ وَلَمْ يُشْرَبْ مِنْهُ. فَقَالَ: يا بَنِي عَبْدِ الْمُطَّلِبِ انِّي بُعِثْتُ إِلَيْكُمْ خاصَّةً وَالَى النّاسِ عامَّةً، وَقَدْ رَايْتُمْ مِنْ هذِهِ الآيَةِ ما قَدْ رَايْتُمْ فَايُّكُمْ يُبايِعُنِي عَلى انْ يَكُونَ اخِي وَصاحِبِي؟ قَالَ: فَلَمْ يَقُمْ الَيْهِ احَدٌ، فَلَمّا كانَ فِي الثّالِثَةِ ضَرَبَ بِيَدِهِ عَلى يَدِي.

God's Messenger gathered together [or invited] the Sons of 'Abd al-Muṭṭalib among whom was a band, all of whom would eat spring lamb and drink sixteen pints (*farqan*). He made them a portion (*mudd*) of food, and they ate until they were full. The food remained as it was, as if it had not been touched. He then called for a drinking bowl and they all drank until their thirst was quenched, but the drink remained as if it had not been touched or drunk from. He then said: Sons of 'Abd al-Muṭṭalib, I have been sent to you in particular and to everyone in general. You have seen what you have seen of this sign. Now, which of you will pledge allegiance to me to be my brother and companion? No one got up for him, so the third time he clapped his hand onto my hand.[148]

We cited the Clan *Hadith* in detail in previous lessons[149] and it was clear that on that day that the Master of the Faithful was chosen as vizier, brother, caliph and guardian.

In any event, the *hadith* mentioned thus far are a small portion of the *hadiths* narrated on this matter.

Sayyid Hāshim Baḥrānī cites numerous *hadith* in *Ghāyat al-Marām* on Ali's being made the Prophet's brother: twenty-one of them are Sunni *hadith* on page 478, and five are Shi'a *hadith* on page 481. There are 38 Sunni *hadith* on page 482 and 34 Shi'a *hadith* on page 486, all about the Imam's being made God's Messenger's brother. Many other Sunni scholars narrate it, such as Tirmidhi, in his *Saḥīḥ*, Baghawī in *Maṣābīḥ al-Sunnah*, Ibn Kathīr in *al-Bidāyah wa al-Nihāyah*, and Mullā 'Alī Muttaqī Ḥanafī in *Kanz al-'Ummāl*, on the authority of several Ḥanafī and Shāfi'ī writers. Similarly the matter is cited by Ibn Kathīr in *Usd al-Ghābah*, Muwaffaq ibn Ahmad Ḥanafī Khārazmī in *al-Manāqib*, Ahmad ibn Hanbal in *al-Musnad*, Ibrāhīm ibn Muhammad Ḥamwīnī Shāfi'ī via several chains of transmission in *Farā'id al-Simṭayn*, al-Manāwī in *Kunūz al-Ḥaqā'iq*, as published in the marginal notes to al-Suyūṭī al-Shāfi'ī's *al-Jāmi' al-Ṣaghīr*, by Muhammad ibn Ṭalḥah Shāfi'ī in *Maṭālib al-Su'ūl*, Sibṭ ibn al-Jawzī in *al-Tadhkirah*, Ibn Ṣabbāgh Mālikī in *al-Fuṣūl al-Muhimmah*, Muḥib al-Dīn Ṭabarī in *Dhakhā'ir al-'Uqbā*, Jamāl al-Dīn Muhammad ibn Yūsuf Zarandī Ḥanafī in *Durar al-Simṭayn*, and elsewhere.

All the *hadiths* narrated thus far about his being made his brother are from Sunni sources and books, but there are also many recorded by the Shi'a in their books, except that our intention has been to quote mainly from Sunni sources, based on the principle that the best evidence is evidence relied upon by the opponent. That is why we content ourselves with what we have cited here.[150]

Sayyid Ismā'īl Ḥimyarī says:

فَتًى اِخْوَاهُ الْمُصْطَفٰى خَيْرُ مُرْسَلٍ وَخَيْرُ شَهِيدٍ ذُو الْجَنَاحَيْنِ جَعْفَر

A hero whose two brothers are al-Muṣṭafā, the best envoy, and the best martyr, winged Ja'far.

The companions' spirituality can be measured by whose brother the Prophet made them, given *he speaks not out of desire* (53:3), because this bond took full consideration of the Companions' spiritual side, intellectual compatibility, level of affection, and friendship and aspirations. That is why we see him make Abū Bakr 'Umar's brother, 'Uthmān 'Abd al-Raḥmān Ibn 'Awf's, Ṭalḥah ibn Ubaydillāh Zubayr Ibn al-'Awwam's, Abū Dharr al-Ghifārī Miqdād Ibn 'Amr's, and Mu'āwiyah ibn Abī Sufyān Ḥubāb Ibn Yazīd al-Majāshi'ī's.[151] [152] As for his making the Master of the Faithful his brother, there are secrets behind that which will become clear through reflecting on and

scrutinizing narrations on this and other matters, because those narrations show us how he interacted with the Master of the Faithful.

Indubitably this brotherhood was not honorary or superficial but rather a true spiritual connection, because when the Master of the Faithful asked him why he had left him brotherless, he replied that he was his brother, that he had no other brother, and that he had saved him for himself. This true bond indicates a certain unity in their very nature and disposition like two actual brothers who come from the same origin and develop in the same womb. Thus is the holy spirit of the Prophet and the purified soul of the Master of the Faithful: they emanate from the world of light—unity.

Based on this there are some *hadiths* on the authority of the Prophet that we cited earlier:

> Ali and I were created from a certain single light. That light moved through the loins of our ancestors up to 'Abd al-Muṭṭalib. It then divided into two halves: half to 'Abdullāh and half to Abū Ṭālib. Then, God's Messenger manifested from 'Abdullāh's, and God's Messenger's executor manifested from Abū Ṭālib—the former is the Seal of the Prophets and the latter the seal of the executors.[153]

We also related some *hadiths* that say: "Ali and I were created from a single tree and all other people are from different trees." He also said: "and the other Messengers are from other trees." We also explained that there are many *hadith* that say that the two of them were one soul: "Ali ibn Abī Ṭālib (as) is my soul," and his words, "He is like me."[154]

Indeed, this unity of thought and nature between those two greats in this world and at every stage is only due to their esoterically being one light and essence. This is extremely important, because they are like two brothers representing two branches from a single root. Those two Leaders in the world of humanity were two separate bodies of a single light and essence. That is why when the Prophet, who was the Master of the envoys, the Imam of the God-fearing, and the Messenger of the Lord of all the worlds, with no equal, said that Ali was his brother, Ḥudhayfah said that the status of Ali ibn Abī Ṭālib as the [Prophet's] brother dictates that he was "the Master of the executors, the Imam of the pious, and appointed by the Lord of all worlds" with no equal. Ḥudhayfah deduced this interpretation from the very meaning of brotherhood. Proof of the correctness of this interpretation is the Messenger's words, "Written on Heaven's door is:

محمد رسول الله و علیٌّ اخوه

Mohammad is God's Messenger and Ali is his brother.

Heaven is the world of meaning and truth, and the manifestation of what was hidden and secret—God's Messenger and God's Friend were both there in those worlds and indeed in worlds above them.

That is why the Prophet said that Ali's being his brother had been written on Heaven's door for two thousand years. "Before" refers to higher worlds where those two holy souls were one.

The other proof is what most *hadiths* on the authority of God's Messenger say:

> Ali, you are my brother in this world and the Hereafter; this world is a visible world, and the Hereafter is a hidden world. That is, in this world, you are my brother with respect to communication, fighting over the interpretation of the Qur'an, struggle, knowledge, judgment, and all other matters of prophecy. You are my brother in the Hereafter, you are my brother with respect to knowledge, gnosis, laudable attributes such as generosity, tolerance, forgiveness, self-sacrifice, and all aptitudes, and with respect to knowing secrets and hidden things in all places.[155]

What is nice is what he says in some of the *hadith* cited: "You are my brother—my *rafiq*," which means: "You will be with me and accompany me at all those stages." He said to emphasize this meaning: "You are my brother and I am your brother." Obviously brotherhood is a relative matter, so whoever is a brother to another, that other is inevitably brother to the former—there is no need for repetition, but God's Messenger repeated it anyway, for emphasis, leaving no room for doubt or interpretation.

That is why we see him say: "The end of whoever dies following your religion will be made safety and faith." "Those following your religion..."—your followers (*Shi'a*)—"...are surrounded by goodness, health, security, safety, faith, and certainty as long as the sun rises or sets and as long as the world is there." "God will make whoever dies hating you die the death of the people of ignorance," meaning whoever has no connection to you knows nothing about Islam. "Whoever does not know you, does not know me." "Whoever hates you hates me." "Whoever rejects and denies you, rejects and denies me."

Immediately after explaining the essence of brotherhood, God's Messenger would refer to [Ali's] being vizier, likening it to Aaron's being brother and vizier to Moses. Thus, the Master of the Faithful was to the Prophet as Aaron was to Moses in all respects except prophecy, because no one would have it after him. So he was to him as Aaron was to Moses in all spiritual and manifest respects such as being caliph,

executor, vizier and brother, and in sublime elevated meanings, knowing secrets and what is in people's minds. He said to him after referring to his being his brother:

> You are the greatest righteous one, and the greatest separator between truth and falsehood, you are he who will pay my debt by passing on the message. You are he who will communicate from me and fulfill my promises. You are my equal, so whatever issues from me, issues from you.

Further evidence is his words: "This is great pride for you. After my death, if anyone vies with you, say, 'I am God's servant and God's Messenger's brother.' No one else but a liar can claim to be."

In any event, this brief discussion thus far was only to understand the *hadiths* to ascertain what "brother" means. What God's Messenger said after these words explains what brother *means*:

ووصيي ووزيري

My executor and my vizier,

فى الدُّنيا والآخرة،

In this world and the Hereafter,

وانت الصِّدّيقُ الأكبَرُ

You are the greatest righteous one,

وَانْتَ تَقْضى دَيْنى وَتُنْجِزعِداتى.

You will pay my debt and fulfill my promises, and so on.

Therefore, it can certainly be said that the position of "brother" is the highest of all the Master of the Faithful's positions because being caliph, vizier, guardian, Master, heir, and so on all stem from his being at one with him and his brother. Apart from the position of servitude to God, there is no position higher than that; that is why the Messenger of God says: "After my death, say to whoever vies with you: 'I am God's servant and His Messenger's brother.'"

'Umar Rejects Ali's Being the Prophet's Brother

This notification by the Prophet is notification of an unseen truth and revelation of the truth, because no one but 'Umar has ever denied that Ali is God's Messenger's brother. It was when Ali was appallingly led

to the mosque to pledge allegiance and 'Umar had the audacity to turn to him and say: "By God, if you do not pledge allegiance to Abū Bakr, I shall behead you." He replied: "You will kill God's servant and His Messenger's brother." 'Umar said: "God's servant, yes. His Messenger's brother, no."

Ibn Qutaybah says:

فَاَخْرَجُوا عَلِيّاً فَمَضَوْا بِهِ اِلى اَبى بَكْرٍ فَقالُوا لَهُ: بايِعْ، فَقالَ: اِنْ اَنَا لَمْ اَفْعَلْ فَمَهْ؟ قالُوا: اِذَنْ وَاللهِ الَّذى لا اِلهَ اِلّا هُوَ نَضْرِبُ عُنُقَكَ. قالَ: اِذاً تَقْتُلُونَ عَبْدَ اللهِ وَاَخا رَسُولِهِ، قالَ عُمَرُ: اَمّا عَبْدُ اللهِ فَنَعَمْ، وَاَمّا اَخُو رَسُولِهِ فَلا، وَاَبُو بَكْرٍ ساكِتٌ لا يَتَكَلَّمُ، فَقالَ لَهُ عُمَرُ: اَلا تَأْمُرُ فِيهِ بِاَمْرِكَ؟ فَقالَ: لا اُكْرِهُهُ عَلى شَيْءٍ ما كانَتْ فاطِمَةُ اِلى جَنْبِهِ، فَلَحِقَ عَلِيٌّ بِقَبْرِ رَسُولِ اللهِ صلى الله عليه و آله وسلم يَصِيحُ وَيَبْكى، وَيُنادى: يَا بْنَ اُمَّ اِنَّ الْقَوْمَ اسْتَضْعَفُونى وَكادُوا يَقْتُلُونَنى.

They dragged Ali out and took him to Abū Bakr. There, they told him: "Pledge allegiance." Ali replied: "If I don't, what then?" They said: "By God apart from Whom there is no deity, we shall behead you." Ali said: "Then you will be killing God's servant and His Messenger's brother." 'Umar said: "God's servant, yes. His Messenger's brother, no." In the meantime, Abū Bakr was silent, not saying anything. So, 'Umar objected to him: "Are you not going to give an order concerning him?" Abū Bakr replied: "As long as Fāṭimah is beside him and supporting him I am not going to oblige him to pledge allegiance."

It was then Ali (as) dropped himself on the grave of the Prophet, shouted, sobbed, and called: *O son of my mother, surely the people reckoned me and well-nigh slew me!* (7:150)[156]

Here, in accordance with the *hadith* about his position, he is alluding to the case of Moses' brother Aaron, when Moses left him in charge of the Israelites and set off for the meeting with his Lord. In his absence, the Samaritan embellished a calf for them to worship.

When the Israelites saw the ornate calf, they were delighted and prostrated before it. After that, they rebelled against Moses' executor and brother, Aaron, forsook obedience to him, and were averse to serving God. No matter how much Aaron cried and advised them to stop their silly behavior, and tried to stop the Samaritan from beguiling them, it was to no avail.

The Samaritan's wicked propagation, the ornate calf, and to make matters worse, the people's desire to return to idolatry—after having abandoned it for so long—were so extreme that Aaron's words seemed nonsense to them.

When Moses returned from Mount Sinai and found that his people had taken to the calf, he shouted at his brother for letting them do so.

قَالَ ابْنَ اُمَّ اِنَّ الْقَوْمَ اسْتَضْعَفُوْنِیْ وَكَادُوْا یَقْتُلُوْنَنِیْ

[Aaron] *said: "O, son of my mother, surely the people reckoned me weak and well-nigh slew me.* (7:150)

Lessons Twenty-Five to Thirty:
The Appointment of the Master of the Faithful as Guardian by God's Messenger

LESSONS TWENTY-FIVE TO THIRTY

In the Name of God, the Merciful, the Compassionate
On the infallibility of the Prophets and the Imams
May God bless Mohammad and his pure Household, and God's curse on their enemies from now until the Day of Resurrection! There is no power or strength save through the Lofty, Glorious God.

The Wise God says in His Glorious Book:

يا ايُّهَا الَّذينَ آمَنُوا اطيعُوا اللهَ وَاطيعُوا الرَّسُولَ وَاولِي الْامرِ مِنكُم فَانْ تَنازَعتُم فى شَىءٍ فَرُدُّوهُ الَى اللهِ وَ الرَّسُولِ انْ كُنتُم تُؤمِنُونَ بِاللهِ وَاليَومِ الآخِرِ ذلِكَ خَيرٌ وَاحسَنُ تَأويلًا.

O you who believe! Obey God, and obey the Messenger and those of you who are in authority; and if you have a dispute concerning any matter, refer it to God and the Messenger if you are (in truth) believers in God and the Last Day. That is better and more seemly in the end. (4:59)

The holy religion of Islam is the most perfect religion. Its legislation is based on innate religiosity, and it provides mankind with whatever is needed to lead him to perfection and homes of bliss; as God states:

فَأَقِم وَجهَكَ لِلدّينِ حَنيفًا فِطرَةَ اللهِ الَّتى فَطَرَ النّاسَ عَلَيها.

...so set your face steadily towards the religion, God's handiwork in which He has created mankind. (30:30)

Islam has not left anything not said most fully about intuitive laws:

اليَومَ أَكمَلتُ لَكُم دينَكُم وَاتمَمتُ عَلَيكُم نِعمَتى.

This day, have I perfected your religion for you, and completed My favor unto you. (5:3)

And the Prophet stated:

انَّما بُعِثتُ لِاتَمِّمَ مَكارِمَ الاخلاق.

I have only been sent to perfect the best of ethics.[157]

And he stated:

مامن شیء یقربکم الی الله الا وقد دعوتکم به، وما من شیء یبعدکم عن النار الا وقد نهیتکم عنه.

There is nothing that brings you closer to God that I have not called you to, and there is nothing which keeps you away from Hell that I have not prohibited you from.[158]

Testamentary Instruction Is an Instinctive, Rational, and Religious Law

Testamentary instruction is a religious law based on instinct. Testamentary instruction means a person leaving instructions pertaining to his religious and worldly affairs so that they are not left in vain—just as affairs were at their best in your lifetime, so should they be after your death. Testamentary instruction is a rational imperative, and Islam has endorsed it; therefore, there are three stages to this imperative:

The first stage is instinctive, meaning that everyone instinctively wants to do his own business and oversee his own affairs in accordance with his own judgment and desire. It is the command of one's nature and the divinely bestowed instinct for man not to like the reins to slip from his hands and be in the hands of a stranger. Just as a man is interested in his wealth and position, he likes to be the one in charge of them, looking after them. This desire is not limited to a person's lifetime. A person even wants to know that years after his death, his estate will be looked after properly.

Therefore, when he is still alive—living in this world—he looks intently towards the time after his death, striving hard to impose his will and express his opinion, and freely so, as he sees best for himself, to protect whatever knowledge, books, charity, buildings, wife, children, and farmland, and whatever else he leaves behind. He strives as hard as he can to ensure that happens after his death.

Even animals have this instinct. Most animals that are certain of their imminent death and see the signs start building nests or caves for their young to live in, out of danger.

Second is the rational imperative. Without a doubt, as a commander, a man's reason does not let him neglect and forget his affairs; he has to choose an heir to look after and protect them and regulate and use them in the most appropriate way after his death, just as within his lifetime.

Reasonable people look down on those who die intestate—without making provision for their families, wealth and affairs, farms, gardens, and other assets; they consider such people to be at fault and criticize

them for not writing a proper will. On the other hand, they consider sensible those who leave wills and appoint wise executors to look after their affairs after their death.

Third is the religious imperative based on instinct and reason, and in all creeds and religions, probate law is considered to be commendable. In the holy religion of Islam, which is the crown of all religions, it has been perfected and clearly implemented. As is stated:

كُتِبَ عَلَيْكُمْ اِذَا حَضَرَ اَحَدَكُمُ الْمَوْتُ اِنْ تَرَكَ خَيْرَا ۨالْوَصِيَّةُ لِلْوَالِدَيْنِ وَالْاَقْرَبِيْنَ بِالْمَعْرُوْفِ حَقًّا عَلَى الْمُتَّقِيْنَ
فَمَنْۢ بَدَّلَهٗ بَعْدَ مَا سَمِعَهٗ فَاِنَّمَاۤ اِثْمُهٗ عَلَى الَّذِيْنَ يُبَدِّلُوْنَهٗ اِنَّ اللّٰهَ سَمِيْعٌ عَلِيْمٌ.

It is ordained for you that when death approaches any of you, and he leaves behind some property, he should make a proper will for his parents and near relatives—an obligation upon the God-fearing. Then anyone who changes it after hearing, the sin is theirs who make the change—surely God is the Knowing Hearer. (2:180-181)

Guardianship Is the Most Important Essential of the Religion

The most important and fundamental matter in religion is the matter of guardianship: who is in charge of religious matters, exoteric and esoteric, bodily and spiritual, worldly and pertaining to the Hereafter, material and immaterial, pertaining to worship, and societal. All these are religious affairs, and God's Messenger was in charge of all of them.

Guardianship is the spirit of the religion. Without it the religion would be like a corpse with no soul: a religion without a Prophet sent by God is like treating a patient without a physician, or building a house without an architect. Thus, the stability of a religion is in the hand of its custodian and defender, who is familiar with its roots and branches and looks after its knowledge. Just as people without religion fall off the course of humanity and are human in name only, religion also derails without an Imam and is religion in name only. That is why the Prophet enjoined it more than any other religious matter. The Holy Messenger attached great importance to guardianship, constantly emphasizing it and reminding people of it by addressing them, making them pledge allegiance, and having them testify to it, a tenth, hundredth, or thousandth of which he did not do for any other religious commandment.

Studying the Prophet's life and reading authentic history makes it clear that nothing was more important to him than Ali's guardianship. It is actually as important as Islam itself, as important as prophecy and the Qur'an. In fact, it is the spirit of prophecy and the spirit of the Qur'an.

In this series of discussions, we relate the Prophet's *hadiths* on Ali's guardianship uttered on various occasions such as the Clan *Hadith*, Anas' *Hadith*, the Ghadīr *Hadith*, the *Hadith* on [Ali's] Status (*manzilah*), the Two Weighty Things (*thaqalayn*) *Hadith*, the Ark *Hadith* and others. Some of them have been explained in this book and others will be cited later on. We want to set out the *hadiths* in which the word executor (*waṣī*) is specifically used so that it becomes clear how many times the Prophet referred to Ali as *sayyid al-awṣiyā'* (the chief of the executors), *sayyid al-waṣiyyīn* (the chief of the executors) and *waṣiyyī* (my executor). He is also referred to as *kalīfatī* (my caliph) and words that mean the same as caliph and executor on many occasions.

God's Messenger's Appointment of the Master of the Faithful as Executor

The first day the Prophet invited his clan to Islam, he announced that Ali was his brother, vizier, executor, and caliph. We have related the events of that session in this book.

Ibn al-Maghāzilī, a distinguished Sunni scholar, narrates via his chains that the Prophet said:

يا عَلِيُّ انتَ سيّدُ المُسلِمينَ وَامامُ المُتّقينَ وَقائِدُ الغُرِّ المُحَجَّلينَ وَيَعسُوبُ المُؤمِنين.

O Ali, you are the chief of the Muslims, Imam of the pious, leader of the bright-faced, white-footed, and chief drone (*ya'sūb*) to the believers."[159]

Ibn al-Maghāzilī says: "Abū al-Qāsim al-Ṭā'ī said, 'I asked Ahmad ibn Yaḥyā what *ya'sūb* means. He replied: "A *ya'sūb* is a chief drone bee."' In this *hadith*, the Prophet has likened Ali ibn Abī Ṭālib to a chief drone."

Shaykh 'Abd al-Ḥāfiẓ ibn Badrān narrates via his chain of transmission from many Shaykhs on the authority of al-Sha'bī:

قالَ عَلِيٌّ عليه السلام: قالَ لي رَسُولُ اللهِ صلى الله عليه و آله وسلم: مَرحَباً بِسيّدِ المُسلِمينَ وَامامِ المُتّقينَ.
قيلَ لِعَلِيٍّ: فَأَيُّ شَيءٍ كانَ مِن شُكرِكَ؟ قالَ: حَمِدتُ اللهَ عَزَّوَجَلَّ عَلى ما آتاني، وَسَأَلتُهُ الشُّكرَ عَلى ما اوْلاني، وَانْ يَزيدَني مِمّا اعْطاني.

Ali (as) said: God's Messenger said to me: "Welcome, Chief of the Muslims and Imam of the Pious."

Ali (as) was asked: How did you give thanks?

He replied: I praised God, Mighty and Sublime is He, for what He had granted me, I asked Him to make me grateful for what He had bestowed—and asked Him for more of what He had given me.[160]

Ḥamwīnī, one of the greatest Sunni scholars, relates via his chain of transmission that Jābir ibn 'Abdullāh al-Anṣārī said:

كُنتُ يَوماً مَعَ النَّبِيِّ صلى الله عليه و آله وسلم فِي بَعضِ حيطانِ المَدينَةِ وَيَدُ عَلِيٍّ فِي يَدِهِ، فَمَرَرنا بِنَخلٍ فَصاحَ النَّخلُ: هذا سَيِّدُ الأَنبياءِ وَهذا عَلِيٌّ سَيِّدُ الأَوصِياءِ وَابُو الأَئِمَّةِ الطّاهِرينَ، ثُمَّ مَرَرنا بِنَخلٍ فَصاحَ النَّخلُ: هذا المَهدِيُّ، وَهذا الهادي، ثُمَّ مَرَرنا بِنَخلٍ فَصاحَ النَّخلُ: هذا رَسُولُ اللهِ، وَهذا عَلِيٌّ سَيفُ اللهِ. فَالتَفَتَ النَّبِيُّ الى عَلِيٍّ فَقالَ: يا عَلِيُّ سَمِّهِ الصَّيحانِيَّ، فَسُمِّيَ مِن ذلِكَ اليَومِ الصَّيحانِي.

One day, I was with the Prophet (s) in one of the gardens of Medina. Ali's hand was in his hand. We then passed a date palm and the date palm shouted: "This is the Master of the Prophets, and that is Ali, the Master of the executors and father of the Immaculate Imams." We then passed [another] date palm, and the date palm shouted: "This is the Guided One (*al-Mahdī*) and that is the Guide (*al-Hādī*)." We then passed another date palm, and the date palm shouted: "This is Mohammad, God's Messenger, and that is Ali, the Sword of God." Thereafter, the Prophet turned to Ali (as) and said: "Ali, call it *sayḥānī* (Shouter)." It has been called *sayḥānī* ever since that day.[161]

Ḥamwīnī also narrates via an unbroken chain on the authority of Sa'īd ibn Jubayr that Ibn 'Abbās said:

قالَ رَسُولُ اللهِ صلى الله عليه و آله وسلم لِاُمِّ سَلَمَةَ: هَذا عَلِيُّ بنُ أَبِي طالِبٍ لَحمُهُ لَحمِي وَدَمُهُ دَمِي وَهُوَ مِنِّي بِمَنزِلَةِ هارُونَ مِن مُوسى إِلّا أَنَّهُ لا نَبِيَّ بَعدِي

يا اُمَّ سلمة هذا امِيرُ المُؤمِنينَ وَسَيِّدُ المُسلِمينَ وَوَصِيِّي وَعَيبَةُ عِلمِي وَبابِيَ الَّذي اوتى مِنهُ، اخي فِي الدُّنيا وَالآخِرَةِ، وَمَعي فِي السَّنامِ الأَعلى، يَقتُلُ النّاكِثينَ وَالقاسِطينَ وَالمارِقين.

God's Messenger (s) told Umm Salamah:

This is Ali ibn Abī Ṭālib. His flesh is my flesh and his blood is my blood. He is to me as Aaron was to Moses except that there is no other Prophet after me. Umm Salamah, this is the Master of the Faithful, the chief (*sayyid*) of the Muslims, my executor and the treasurer of my knowledge, the gate through which I am reached, my brother in this

world and the Hereafter. He will be with me on the highest summit. He will kill the [covenant] breakers (*nākithīn*), the deviators (*qāsiṭīn*) and the through-and-throughs (*māriqīn*) [those who fought him at the Battles of the Camel, Ṣiffīn, and Nahrawan].[162]

Abū Nu'aym Aḥmad ibn 'Abdullāh al-Ḥāfiẓ narrates via his chain on the authority of Ibn Abī Laylā that Hasan ibn Ali said:

قالَ رَسُولُ اللهِ: ادعُوا الَيَّ سيّدَ العَرَبِ ـ يَعنى عَلِيّاً ـ فَقالَتْ عائِشَةُ: أَلَسْتَ سيّدَ العَرَبِ؟ قالَ: انَا سيّدُ وُلْدِ آدَمَ و عَلِيٌّ سيّدُ العَرَبِ. فَلَمّا جاءَ عَلِيٌّ ارسَلَ الَى الأنصارِ فَاَتَوْهُ فَقالَ لَهُمْ: يا مَعْشَرَ الأنصارِ الا ادُلُّكُمْ عَلى ما انْ تَمَسَّكْتُمْ بِهِ لَنْ تَضِلُّوا بَعْدَهُ ابَداً؟ قالُوا: بَلى يا رَسُولَ اللهِ، قالَ: هذا عَلِيٌّ فَاَحِبُّوهُ بِحُبّى وَاَكْرِمُوهُ بِكَرامَتى فَانَّ جَبْرَئيلَ امَرَنى بِالَّذى قُلْتُ.

The Prophet stated: "Call the Chief of the Arabs," meaning Ali, so 'Ā'ishah asked: "Aren't you the Chief of the Arabs?" He replied: "I am the chief of the children of Adam, but Ali is the Chief of the Arabs." Then, when Ali came to him, [the Prophet] sent some for the supporters.

Thereafter, they came to him and he said to them: "O ye supporters, shall I not direct you to that to which if you cling, so you will never go astray after I die?" They all said: "Do, God's Messenger." He said: "This is Ali; love him as you love me and respect him as you respect me. Indeed, Gabriel has commanded me to say as I have done."

(Abū Nu'aym says: "They also narrate this *hadith* via another chain of narration, also on the authority of Sa'īd ibn Jubayr.")

In his book *Faḍā'il 'Alī wa Awlādihi* (*Ali and His Offspring's Merits*) containing a hundred achievements narrated by Sunnis, Abū al-Hasan Faqih Muhammad ibn Ahmad ibn Ali ibn Shādhān narrates via his chain on the authority of Ḥabbah al-'Uran that the Master of the Faithful said:

قالَ رَسُولُ اللهِ: انَا سَيِّدُ الأوَّلينَ وَالآخِرينَ، وَانْتَ يا عَلِيُّ سَيِّدُ الخَلائِقِ بَعْدى، اوَّلُنا كَآخِرِنا وَآخِرُنا كَاوَّلِنا.

God's Messenger said: "I am the Master of the first and the last, and you, Ali, are the Master of all the creatures after me. Our beginning is like our end, and our end is like our beginning."[163]

Ibn Shādhān also narrates on the authority of the Sunnis that Ibn 'Abbās said:

قالَ رَسُولُ اللهِ صلى الله عليه و آله وسلم: وَالَّذي بَعَثَني بِالْحَقِّ بَشيراً مَا اسْتَقَرَّ الْكُرسِيُّ وَالْعَرْشُ وَلا دارَ الْفَلَكُ وَلا قامَتِ السَّماواتُ وَالْارْضُ الّا بِانْ كُتِبَ عَلَيْها: لا اله الّا اللهُ، مُحَمَّدٌ رَسُولُ اللهِ، عَلِيٌّ امِيرُ الْمُؤْمِنينَ. وَانَّ اللهَ تَعالى عَرَجَ بي الَى السَّماءِ وَاخْتَصَّني بِلَطيفِ نِدائِهِ قالَ: يا مُحَمَّدُ، قُلْتُ: لَبَّيْكَ رَبّي وَسَعْدَيْكَ، فَقالَ: انَا الْمَحْمُودُ وانْتَ مُحَمَّدٌ، شَقَقْتُ اسْمَكَ مِنِ اسْمي وَفَضَّلْتُكَ عَلى جَميعِ بَريَّتي فَانْصِبْ اخاكَ عَلِيّاً عَلَماً يَهْدي بِهِمَ الى دينى. يا مُحَمَّدُ انّي جَعَلْتُ عَلِيّاً اميرَ الْمُؤْمنينَ، فَمَنْ تَأَمَّرَ عَلَيْهِ لَعَنْتُهُ، وَمَنْ خالَفَهُ عَذَّبْتُهُ، وَمَنْ اطاعَهُ قَرَّبْتُهُ. يا مُحَمَّدُ انّي جَعَلْتُ عَلِيّاً امامَ الْمُسْلِمينَ، فَمَنْ تَقَدَّمَ عَلَيْهِ اخَّرْتُهُ وَمَنْ عَصاهُ اسْتَخْفَيْتُهُ، انَّ عَلِيّاً سَيِّدُ الْوَصِيّينَ، وَ قائِدُ الْغُرِّ الْمُحَجَّلينَ، وَ حُجَّتي عَلى جَميعِ خَلْقي اجْمَعينَ.

God's Messenger (s) said:

> By Him Who sent me as a bringer of glad tidings, the Chair and Throne did not become fixed, the heavenly bodies did not start spinning, and the heavens and earth were not established without there being written on them: "There is no deity except God. Mohammad is God's Messenger, and Ali is the Master of the Faithful. When the Transcendent God took me up to Heaven. He bestowed on me His graceful call: Mohammad! I replied: At Your service and bidding, my Lord." He continued:
>
> > I am the Praiseworthy and you are commended (Mohammad)—I have derived your name from My Own Name, and I have made you superior to all My creatures, so appoint your brother Ali as a banner to guide them to My religion. Mohammad! I have made Ali the Master of the Faithful. I curse whoever comes to power over him, and will punish whoever opposes him and favor whoever obeys him. Mohammad! Surely I made Ali the Imam of the Muslims. I shall forsake whoever puts himself before him and shun whoever disobeys him. Surely Ali is the Master of the executors, the leader of the bright-faced, white-footed and My Proof for all My creatures.[164]

He also narrates on the authority of the Sunnis that Ibn 'Abbās said:

سَمِعْتُ رَسُولَ اللهِ صلى الله عليه و آله وسلم يَقُولُ:

قالَ: سَمِعْتُ رَسُولَ اللهِ صلى الله عليه و آله وسلم يَقُولُ: مَعاشِرَ النّاسِ! اعْلَمُوا انَّ لِلّهِ تَعالى باباً مَنْ دَخَلَهُ امِنَ من النارِ ومِنَ الْفَزَعِ الاكْبَرِ، فَقالَ لَهُ ابُو سَعيدِ الْخُدْرِيُّ: يا رَسُولَ اللهِ اهْدِنا الى هذَا الْبابِ حَتّى نَعْرِفَهُ، قالَ: هُوَ

عَلِيُّ بْنُ ابی طالِبٍ سَيِّدُ الْوَصِيِّينَ وَامِيرُ الْمُؤمِنينَ وَاخُو رَسُولِ رَبِّ الْعالَمِينَ وَخَلِيفَةُ اللهِ عَلَى النَّاسِ اجْمَعِينَ. مَعاشِرَ النَّاسِ، مَنْ احَبَّ انْ يَسْتَمْسِكَ بِالْعُرْوَةِ الْوُثْقَى الَّتِي لَا انْفِصامَ لَها فَلْيَسْتَمْسِكْ بِوِلايَةِ عَلِيِّ بْنِ ابِيطالِبٍ فَانَّ وِلايَتَهُ وِلايَتِي وَطاعَتَهُ طاعَتِي. يا مَعاشِرَ النَّاسِ مَنْ احَبَّ انْ يَعْرِفَ الْحُجَّةَ بَعْدِي فَلْيَعْرِفْ عَلِيَّ بْنَ ابی طالِبٍ بَعْدِي وَالْائِمَّةَ مِنْ ذُرِّيَّتِي فَانَّهُمْ خُزّانُ عِلْمِي. فَقامَ جابِرُ بْنُ عَبْدِ اللهِ الْانْصارِيُّ فَقالَ: يا رَسُولَ اللهِ ما عِدَّةُ الْائِمَّةِ؟ فَقالَ: يا جابِرُ سَأَلْتَنِي ـ رَحِمَكَ اللهُ ـ عَنِ الْاسْلامِ بِاجْمَعِهِ، عِدَّتُهُمْ عِدَّةُ الشُّهُورِ وَهُوَ عِنْدَ اللهِ اثْنا عَشَرَ شَهْراً فِي كِتابِ اللهِ يَوْمَ خَلَقَ السَّمواتِ وَالْارْضَ، وَعِدَّتُهُمْ عِدَّةُ الْعُيُونِ الَّتِي انْفَجَرَتْ مِنْهُ لِمُوسَى بْنِ عِمْرانَ حِينَ ضَرَبَ بِعَصاهُ فَانْفَجَرَتْ مِنْهُ اثْنَا عَشَرَةَ عَيْناً، وَعِدَّةُ نُقَباءِ بَنِي اسْرائِيلَ قالَ اللهُ تعالى: وَلَقَدْ اخَذْنا مِيثاقَ بَنِي اسْرائِيلَ وَبَعَثْنا مِنْهُمُ اثْنَيْ عَشَرَ نَقِيباً فَالْائِمَّةُ يا جابِرُ اثْنا عَشَرَ اماماً، اوَّلُهُمْ عَلِيُّ بْنُ ابی طالِبٍ وَ آخِرُهُمُ الْقائِمُ صَلَواتُ اللهِ عَلَيْهِمْ.

I heard God's Messenger (s) say: O ye people! Know that the Transcendent God has a door. Whoever enters through it will be safe from the Fire and from the biggest fright.

Abū Sa'īd al-Khudrī said to him: God's Messenger, direct us to that door so that we can know it. He replied:

> It is Ali ibn Abī Ṭālib (as) the chief of the executors, the Master of the Believers, the brother of the Messenger of the Lord of All Worlds and similarly God's caliph over all people. O ye people! Whoever would like to cling to the indissoluble bond that cannot be unraveled should cling to Ali Abī Ṭālib's (as) guardianship, because his guardianship is my guardianship, and obedience to him is obedience to me. O ye people! Whoever God has made happy to follow me has to accept Ali ibn Abī Ṭalib's guardianship because his guardianship is my guardianship and obedience to him is obedience to me. O ye people! Whoever would like to know the Proof after I die, should get to know Ali ibn Abī Ṭālib (as) and my offspring after me because they are the treasurers of my knowledge.

Thereafter, Jābir ibn 'Abdullāh al-Anṣārī stood up and asked: O the Prophet, how many Imams are there?

He replied:

> Jābir, God bless you, you have asked about Islam in its entirety. The number of Imams is the number of months, which *according to God is twelve months by God's ordinance in the day that He created the heavens and the earth* (9:36), the number of the springs that gushed out for Moses, son of Amram, when he struck the rock with his staff *and there gushed therefrom twelve springs* (2:60), the number of chieftains.

The Transcendent God says: *We made a covenant with the Children of Israel and We raised twelve chieftains among them.* (5:12)

The Imams, Jābir, are twelve; the first of them is Ali ibn Abī Ṭālib (as) and the Last One is the Performer—God's blessings be upon them all![165]

Ibn Shādhān also narrates from the Sunnis that Abū Dharr al-Ghifārī said:

نَظَرَ النَّبِيُّ صلى الله عليه و آله وسلم الى عَلِيِّ بْنِ ابيطالِبٍ فَقَالَ: هذا خَيْرُ الْاَوَّلِينَ مِنْ اهْلِ السَّماواتِ وَ الْاَرَضِينَ، هذا سَيِّدُ الصِّدِّيقِينَ، هذا سَيِّدُ الْوَصِيِّينَ وَ امامُ الْمُتَّقِينَ وَ قائِدُ الْغُرِّ الْمُحَجَّلِينَ. اذا كانَ يَوْمُ الْقِيامَةِ جاءَ عَلى ناقَةٍ مِنْ نُوقِ الْجَنَّةِ قَدْ اضاءَتِ الْقِيامَةُ مِنْ ضِيائِها، عَلى رَأْسِهِ تاجُ مُرَصَّعٌ بِالزَّبَرْجَدِ وَ الْياقُوتِ فَتَقُولُ الْمَلائِكَةُ: هذا مَلَكٌ مُقَرَّبٌ، وَ يَقُولُ النَّبِيُّونَ: هذا نَبِيٌّ مُرْسَلٌ، فَيُنادِي مُنادٍ مِنْ بُطْنانِ الْعَرْشِ هذَا الصِّدِّيقُ الْاَكْبَرُ، هذا وَصِيُّ حَبِيبِ اللهِ، هذا عَلِيُّ بْنُ ابى طالِبٍ، فَيَقِفُ عَلى مَتْنِ جَهَنَّمَ فَيُخْرِجُ مِنْها مَنْ يُحِبُّ وَ يُدْخِلُ فِيها مَنْ يُبْغِضُ، وَ يَأْتِي ابْوابَ الْجَنَّةِ فَيُدْخِلُ اوْلِياءَهُ بِغَيْرِ حِسابٍ.

The Prophet (s) looked at Ali ibn Abī Ṭālib (as) and said:

> This is the best of the first of the people of the heavens and the earth. This is the chief of the righteous. This is the chief of the executors—the Imam of the pious, the Leader of the bright-faced, white-footed, of the mansions of Paradise. When the Day of Resurrection comes, he will come on a camel from above Heaven from the light of which the Resurrection will be lit up. On his head will be a crown inlaid with chrysalides and sapphire. Then, the angels will say: This is a favored angel, and the Prophets will say: This is an envoy Prophet. A caller will call from the bottom of the Throne: This is the Greatest Righteous One (*al-ṣiddīq al-akbar*). This is God's Beloved's executor. This is Ali ibn Abī Ṭālib. He will then stand on the edge of Hell, extract whomever he loves and send in whomever he hates. He will go to Heaven's doors and send in his friends (*awliyā'ahu*) without a reckoning.[166]

Ibn Shādhān also narrates form the Sunnis on the authority of Imam Riḍā from his forefathers from God's Messenger:

قالَ رَسُولُ اللهِ صلى الله عليه و آله وسلم: سَيَكُونُ بَعْدِي فِتْنَةٌ مُظْلِمَةٌ، النّاجِي مَنْ تَمَسَّكَ بِالْعُرْوَةِ الْوُثْقى، قِيلَ: يا رَسُولَ اللهِ مَنِ الْعُرْوَةُ الْوُثْقى؟ قالَ: وِلايَةُ سَيِّدِ الْوَصِيِّينَ، قِيلَ: يا رَسُولَ اللهِ وَ مَنْ سَيِّدُ الْوَصِيِّينَ؟

قالَ: امیرُالمُؤمنینَ، قیلَ: یارَسُولَ اللهِ وَمَنْ امیرُالمُؤمنینَ؟ قالَ: مَوْلَی المُسلِمینَ وَامامُهُمْ بَعدی، قیلَ: یا رَسُولَ اللهِ وَمَنْ مَوْلَی المُسلِمینَ وَامامُهُمْ بَعدَکَ؟ قالَ: اخی عَلیُّ بنَ ابیطالِب.

God's Messenger (s) said: After my death there will be dark sedition. Only whoever clings to the indissoluble bond will be safe. He was asked: God's Messenger, who is the indissoluble bond? He replied: The chief of the executor's guardianship. He was asked: "God's Messenger, who is the chief of the executors? He replied: The Master of the Faithful. He was asked: God's Messenger, who is the Master of the Faithful? He replied: The Muslims' Master and Imam after me. He was asked: God's Messenger, who is the Muslims' Master and Imam after you?" He replied: My brother, Ali ibn Abī Ṭālib.[167]

Shaykh Ṣadūq—Ibn Bābawayh Qummī—narrates via an unbroken chain from Aṣbagh ibn Nubātah:

قالَ: قالَ امیرُالمُؤمنینَ علیه السلام: انَا خَلیفَةُ رَسُولِ اللهِ وَوَزیرُهُ وَوارِثُهُ، وَانَا اخُورَسُولِ اللهِ وَوَصیُّه، وَانَا صَفِیُّ رَسُولِ اللهِ وَصاحِبُهُ، انَا ابْنُ عَمِّ رَسُولِ اللهِ وَزَوْجُ ابْنَتِهِ وَابُو وُلْدِه، وَانَا سَیِّدُ الْوَصِیّینَ، انَا الْحُجَّةُ الْعُظمی وَالآیَةُ الْکُبری وَالْمَثَلُ الاعْلی وَبابُ النَّبِیِّ المُصْطَفی، انَا الْعُرْوَةُ الْوُثْقی وَکَلِمَةُ التَّقْوی وَامینُ اللهِ تَعالی ذِکْرُهُ عَلی اهْلِ الدُّنْیا.

The Master of the Faithful (as) said:

> I am the caliph, vizier, and heir to God's Messenger; I am God's Messenger's brother and executor. I am God's Messenger's chosen one and companion.
>
> I am God's Messenger's paternal cousin, his daughter's husband and father to his offspring; I am the chief of the executors.
>
> I am the greatest proof, the biggest sign, the ideal, and the door to the Chosen Prophet.
>
> I am the indissoluble bond, the word of piety; I am God's trustee, transcendent is His Remembrance, to the people of the world.[168]

And, in *al-Iḥtijāj*, Abū Manṣūr Ahmad ibn Ali ibn Abī Tālib Ṭabarsī narrates from Jābir ibn 'Abdullāh al-Anṣārī from Imam Mohammad Bāqir that when 'Umar ibn Khattāb's time came near, he delegated the caliphate to a council of six from the Quraysh, among whom was Ali ibn Abī Ṭālib. He instructed them to choose a caliph from among them in three days' time; they did so and the result of their verdicts was 'Uthmān.

فَلَمّا رَأى امیرُ الْمُؤمنینَ ما هُمْ بِهِ مِنَ الْبَیْعَةِ لِعُثْمانَ قامَ فیهِمْ لِیَتَّخِذَ عَلَیْهِمُ الْحُجَّةَ فَقالَ لَهُمْ: اسْمَعُوا مِنّی، فَاِنْ یَکُ ما اَقُولُ حَقّاً فَاقْبَلُوا، وَاِنْ یَکُ باطِلاً فَانْکِرُوا، ثُمَّ قالَ لَهُمْ: اَنْشُدُکُمْ بِاللهِ الَّذی یَعْلَمُ صِدْقَکُمْ اِنْ صَدَقْتُمْ وَیَعْلَمُ کِذْبَکُمْ اِنْ کَذَبْتُمْ هَلْ فیکُمْ اَحَدٌ صَلّی الْقِبْلَتَیْنِ کِلْتَیْهِما غَیْری؟ قالُوا: لا، قالَ: فَهَلْ فیکُمْ مَنْ بایَعَ الْبَیْعَتَیْنِ کِلْتَیْهِما بَیْعَةَ الْفَتْحِ وَبَیْعَةَ الرِّضْوانِ غَیْری؟ قالُوا: لا ـ وَساقَ الْحَدیثَ بِذِکْرِ مَناقِبِهِ وَفَضائِلِهِ فَیُصَدِّقُونَهُ فی قَوْلِهِ لَهُمْ اِلی اَنْ قالَ: ـ فَاَنْشُدُکُمْ بِاللهِ هَلْ فیکُمْ اَحَدٌ قالَ لَهُ رَسُولُ اللهِ صلی الله علیه و آله وسلم: «اَوَّلُ طالِعٍ یَطْلُعُ عَلَیْکُمْ مِنْ هذَا الْبابِ یا اَنَسُ فَاِنَّهُ امیرُ الْمُؤمنینَ وَسَیِّدُ الْمُسْلِمینَ وَخَیْرُ الْوَصِیّینَ وَاَوْلی بِالنّاسِ، فَقالَ اَنَسٌ: اللّهُمَّ اجْعَلْهُ رَجُلاً مِنَ الْاَنْصارِ، فَکُنْتُ اَنَا الطّالِعَ، فَقالَ رَسُولُ اللهِ لِاَنَسٍ: ما اَنْتَ یا اَنَسُ بِاَوَّلِ رَجُلٍ اَحَبَّ قَوْمَهُ، غَیْری؟ قالُوا: لا.

When Ali (as) saw that they were going to pledge allegiance to 'Uthmān, he stood among them to adduce evidence against them and said: "Listen to me and if what I say is true, accept it, but if it is untrue reject it." He then said to them: "I implore you by God, Who knows your honesty when you are honest and knows your dishonesty when you are dishonest, is there anyone else apart from me among you who prayed in both directions?" They said: "No." He continued: "Is there anyone else apart from me among you who made both pledges of allegiance: the pledge of victory and the pledge of satisfaction?" They replied: "No." The *hadith* continues enumerating his feats and merits, their confirming everything he says to them until he says: "I implore you by God, is there anyone else apart from me among you about whom God's Messenger (s) said: 'O Anas, the first man to enter through this door to you is the Master of the Faithful, the chief of the Muslims, the best of executors, and closer to the people'"? So Anas said: "O God, make it one of the supporters." I was then coming through so God's Messenger told Anas: "Anas, you are not the first man to love his people." They said: "No."[169]

The *Hadith* of Anas Concerning the Guardianship of the Master of the Faithful

We see here that the Imam is relying on Anas' *hadith* as evidence. Anas' *hadith* is well known and respected. There is no doubt it issued from God's Messenger and it is recorded by the greatest Sunni traditionists in their books, not to mention Shi'a traditionists. They list it as one of the indisputable givens, like the Ghadīr and Clan *Hadiths*. This *hadith* has become known as Anas' *Hadith*. Abū Nu'aym Iṣfahānī, in *Ḥilyah al Awliyā'*, (vol. 1, p. 63), Muhammad ibn Ṭalḥah Shāfi'ī in *Maṭālib al-Su'ūl* (p. 21) from Abū Naīm's *Ḥilyah*, Ahmad ibn Muwaffaq Khārazmī in *al-Manāqib* (p. 51), Ibrahim ibn Muhammad Ḥamwīnī Shāfi'ī in *Farā'id al-Simṭayn* (vol. 1, chapter 27), Ganjī Shāfi'ī in *Kifāyat al-Ṭālib* (p.

92) under the heading *Takhaṣṣuṣ Ali bi-kawnihi Sayyid al-Muslimīn* (Ali alone being the chief of the Muslims), Ibn Abī al-Ḥadīd Mu'tazilī Shāfi'ī in *Sharḥ Nahj al-Balāghah* (vol. 2, p. 450), Ḥanafī in *Yanābī' al-Mawaddah*, (p. 313), from Abū Nu'aym's *Ḥilyah*, Ibn Shahr Āshūb in *Manāqib* (vol. 1, p. 543), from Abū Nu'aym's *Ḥilyah*, and Ṭabarī's *Wilāyah*, Sayyid Hāshim Baḥrānī in *Ghāyah al-Marām* (p. 619), from Ḥamwīnī, and Ibn 'Asākir in *Tārīkh Dimishq al-Kabīr* (*The Great History of Damascus*), the part dedicated to the Master of the Faithful, paper 99[170] all narrated via their chain that Anas said:

قالَ رسُول الله صلى الله عليه و آله وسلم: يا انَسُ اسكُبْ لي وَضُوءاً، ثُمَّ قامَ فَصَلّى رَكعَتَيْنِ، ثُمَّ قالَ: يا انَسُ اوَّلُ مَنْ يَدْخُلُ عَلَيْكَ مِنْ هذَا الْبابِ امِيرُ الْمُؤمنينَ وَسَيِّدُ الْمُسلِمينَ وَقائِدُ الْغُرِّ الْمُحَجَّلينَ وَخاتَمُ الْوَصِيّينَ. قالَ انَسٌ: قُلْتُ: اللّهُمَّ اجْعَلْهُ رَجُلاً مِنَ الْانْصارِ، وَكَتَمْتُهُ، اذ جاءَ عَلِيٌّ، فَقالَ: مَنْ هذا يا انَسُ؟ فَقُلْتُ: عَلِيٌّ، فَقامَ مُسْتَبْشِراً فَاعْتَنَقَهُ ثُمَّ جَعَلَ يَمْسَحُ عَرَقَ وَجْهِهِ بِوَجْهِهِ وَيَمْسَحُ عَرَقَ عَلِيٍّ بِوَجْهِهِ. قالَ عَلِيٌّ: يا رَسُولَ اللهِ لَقَدْ رَايْتُكَ صَنَعْتَ شَيْئاً ما صَنَعْتَ لي مِنْ قَبْلُ؟ قالَ: وَما يَمْنَعُنى وَانْتَ تُؤَدّى عَنّى وَتُسْمِعُهُمْ صَوْتى وَتُبَيِّنُ لَهُمْ ما اخْتَلَفُوا فيهِ بَعْدي.

God's Messenger (s) said: O Anas, pour me some water for ablutions. He then prayed two *raka'āts*, then, said: O Anas, the first man to come in through this door to you is the Master of the Faithful, the chief of the Muslims, the Leader of the white-footed and the seal of the executors.

Anas says: I said: 'O God, make it one of the Helpers,' and kept it hidden when Ali came.

[The Prophet] asked: Who is this, Anas? I replied: Ali. [The Prophet] then stood up, delighted, hugged him round the neck, then started wiping the sweat from his [own] face with his face and wiping Ali's sweat with his [own] face. Ali (as) said: God's Messenger, I have seen you do something you have not done for me before. The Holiness answered: What is stopping me, [what with] your paying off my [debts], letting [people] hear my voice, and explaining to them with regard to what they disagree over after I die?[171]

We are going to discuss this *hadith* in two stages. The first is the chains of transmission of this *hadith*, and we will be delving also into the vocabulary used. The second stage is what it means.

The first stage: It became clear to us that the great traditionists have narrated this *hadith* via unbroken chains. We mentioned ten of them by name, along with their books.

No one can criticize its narrators—as Ganjī Shāfi'ī says:

وهذا حديثٌ حسنٌ عالٍ

This *hadith* is good [and] elevated.

It was also stated that this *hadith* is well known. No one objects to it or considers it to be weak, above all, the narrators like Ḥāfiẓ Abū Nu'aym, Ḥamwīnī, and Ṭabarī, who are distinguished *hadith* masters. They narrate it via an unbroken chain from Anas, and Ibn 'Asākir cites it in *Tārīkh Dimishq al-Kabīr*.

Ibn 'Asākir is a famous historian. He knew the Qur'an by heart and was a traditionist. He lived in Damascus and was the friend of Sam'ānī, the author of *al-Ansāb*. He was born in Damascus in 499 A.H. and passed away in 571 A.H.. He narrates this *hadith* via a chain on the authority of Abū Ali Muqri' on the authority of Anas.

Some Discussion on Anas' Hadith

There are only a few minor differences in the words and phrases of this *hadith* to which we referred in the footnotes:

Wuḍū' means the water used to perform ablutions.

Amīr means commander and chief.

Sayyid means the great man in charge.

Qā'id al-Ghurr al-Muḥajjalīn: *Sharḥ al-Qāmūs* says *ghurrah* and *ghurghurah* mean whiteness on the forehead. *Faras agharr* is of the same form as *aḥmar* (red, masculine) and *gharrā'* is the same form as *ḥamrā'* (red, feminine). It is an adjective used to describe a horse. *Agharr*, of the same form as *aḥmar*, means the whiteness of everything. It also says that *ḥujlah* is a camel litter like a *qubbah* or a place decorated with cloths, curtains, and raised couches for a bride. And it is said that: *ḥajjalaha taḥjīlan* in form II means he built a *ḥujlah* for her or led her into it.

Taḥjīl in form II can also means the whiteness on all four legs of a horse. A horse is said to be *maḥjūl*—the same form as *manṣūr*—or *muḥajjal*—the same form as *mu'aẓẓam*.

Majma' al-Baḥrayn: The phrase *Qā'd al-Ghurr al-Muḥajjalīn* in the *hadith* about Ali means the leader of those whose forearms and hands and feet are white from ablutions. When they are called before everyone, or to Heaven, they will be that way. The whitening effect of ablutions on the face, forearms, hands, and feet is metaphorically likened to the whiteness on a horse's face, forelegs, and hind legs.

Miṣbāḥ al-Munīr says that *ḥajl* means anklet (*khilkhāl* or *khalkhāl*). A shackle is metaphorically called a *ḥajl*, the plural of which is *ḥujūl* or *aḥjāl*, like *ḥaml*, the plural of which is *ḥumūl* or *aḥmāl*. *Faras muḥajjal* means a horse the legs of which are white, the whiteness being adjacent

to the pasterns reaching half way up its metacarpi and metatarsi or such. That is where *taḥjīl* occurs in [a horse]. *Taḥjīl* in ablution means washing part of the upper arm and part of the shank when washing the forearms and feet [*sic*].

In *al-Nihāyah*, concerning a horse's attributes, Ibn al-Athīr says: "The best horse is the white-footed one," the whiteness of the legs of which reaches up to where it is shackled, beyond its pasterns but not beyond its knees, because they are where the anklets and shackles go. One of both forelegs cannot be white without one or both hind legs also being white. The *hadith* "My nation are *al-ghurr al-muḥajjalīn*" is derived from this, meaning the whitening of the forearms, hands, face, and feet from ablutions.

Lisān al-'Arab says: "A *ḥujlah* is similar to a camel litter. A bride's *ḥajalah* is well-known—a tent decorated with cloths, curtains, and raised couches, as in the saying, 'Women who do not have anything to wear should stay in their homes (*ḥijāl*).' It then quotes Ibn al-Athīr's aforementioned words."

It is clear from the above that *Qā'id al-Ghurr al-Muḥajjalīn* means one of two things: either *ghurr* means white-foreheaded, and *muḥajjalīn* means white-armed and white-footed, a metonym for the far-reaching luminosity of the arms, faces, and feet of those who perform ablutions, with Ali leading those lightened, pure people to worlds of holiness and purity and words of light; or, *ghurr* means luminous and *muḥajjalīn* means dwellers in the mansions of Heaven. Hence he leads people to the Seventh Heaven, where there is safety and tranquility. The evidence for the first interpretation is that *muḥajjalīn* is used alongside *ghurr*, because *taḥjīl* means whiteness on a horse's forelegs and hind legs and *ghurr* is whiteness on its forehead. Hence the analogy between those who regularly perform ablution, causing a whitening of five parts of the body—the face, forearms [to finger-tips] and feet—and, horses, which are white-faced and white-footed, front and rear. The proof for the second interpretation is one of the stages of Paradise, which is the safe and secured mansions as He states:

وَالَّذِينَ آمَنُوا وَعَمِلُوا الصَّالِحَاتِ لَنُبَوِّئَنَّهُم مِّنَ الْجَنَّةِ غُرَفًا.

...and those who have believed and done righteous deeds, We will lodge them in lofty abodes of Paradise. (29:58)

And also He states:

لَٰكِنِ الَّذِينَ اتَّقَوْا رَبَّهُمْ لَهُمْ غُرَفٌ.

...but [for] those who are really heedful of their Lord are lofty abodes. (39:20)

And He states:

وَهُمْ فِي الْغُرُفَاتِ آمِنُونَ.

...and they will be secure in the lofty abodes. (34:37)

He says after citing fourteen of the attributes of the servants of the Merciful in the Sūrah al-Furqān (The Criterion):

اولئِكَ يُجْزَوْنَ الْغُرْفَةَ بِمَا صَبَرُوا وَيُلَقَّوْنَ فِيهَا تَحِيَّةً وَسَلَامًا.

...they will be rewarded with the lofty abode because they were patient, and will be met there with greetings and Peace. (25:75)

The meaning of the seal of the executors is like the meaning of the Seal of the Prophets, because *khātām* or *khātim* means a signet ring used to seal a letter to protect it from forgery. *Sharḥ al-Qāmūs* says that *khitām* is the clay used to seal something. *Khātim* is what is put on the clay to seal; *khātim* and *khātām* both mean a ring for the finger. Later on it says that *khātim* is an active participle, meaning that which seals, whereas *khātām, khātām,* and *khaytām* are nouns, meaning the piece of jewelry or other item worn, used to seal the letters, or worn on the fingers.

Ibn al-Athīr says in *al-Nihāyah*:

آمين، خاتَمُ رَبِّ الْعالَمِينَ عَلى عِبادِهِ الْمُؤْمِنين.

Amen is the Lord of the Worlds' seal upon His believing servants.

It is said that it means His stamp and mark, which keeps symptoms and diseases away from them, because a letter's *khātām* protects it and stops people from seeing what is in it; the word is *khātām* in one dialect and *khātim* in another. *Lisān al-'Arab* says something similar. Thus, if we read it as an active participle—*khātim*—he is the sealer to the Prophets' executors. If it is as read as *khātim* or *khātām,* in the sense of that which is used to seal, he is that seal that is stamped on the calligraphically intricate signature exclusive to the executors' scroll, sealed by the presence of the blessed executor.[172]

Ya'sūb al-Dīn, cited by Ibn Abī al-Ḥadīd, as explained above, means the drone bee in charge of the cell. *Ya'sūb al-Dīn* is a metonym for the

Master of the Faithful's being chief, master, and ruler in all affairs of the religion.

Discussion of the Meaning of Anas' *Hadith*

The Messenger prayed two *rakaʿāts*. However, we know nothing about what happened to him during that prayer, how Gabriel came down or how [the Prophet] saw the Kingdom of Heaven and the Master of the Faithful's status. He himself did not explain any of that.

All we know is that he told Anas after he had finished praying: The first person to enter the room will be the chief of the Muslims, the Master of the Faithful, and the seal of the executors.

Then, when the Master of the Faithful entered, he stood up in that surprising way, like a shepherd finding his lost sheep or a lover finding his beloved, hugged the Master of the Faithful, wiped his face against his and wiped the perspiration off his face with his own to the point that even the Master of the Faithful was surprised at God's Messenger's doing something unprecedented, and asked him confusedly: God's Messenger, I have seen you do something to me that you have never done to me before. Thereafter he referred to the Imam's standing:

> It is you who will give back [everything left with me for safekeeping], fulfill my promises, and let people hear the voice of Monotheism and the call of Islam issuing from me. You are he who will settle people's disputes and differences. It is you who will deal with the seditions and oppressions after I die.

It was as if the Holiness Messenger was testifying that after his demise they would topple Islam and bring another kind of idolatry.

The truth of what we say becomes quite clear upon consideration of the policy of the caliphs who came after the Prophet, such as Muʿāwiyah and Yazīd.

Through the sermons in *Nahj al-Balāghah*, the sermon delivered by the Master of the Martyrs at Minā towards the end of Mua'wiyah's caliphate, and also his other sermons, it becomes clear that they had brought Islam to its knees.[173]

The Prophet knew that the Master of the Faithful was the only man who could defend the truth, fulfill his covenant, and carry out God's covenant trusted to the Messenger, and announce the monotheistic call enshrined in: "There is no god except God, alone, alone," and *Say: "God is One."* (112:1)

And he knew that the Master of the Faithful was the only man whose very origin was at one with his own and who held the highest

levels in understanding the truth and Divine knowledge, and in self-annihilation in the Essence of the One.[174]

That is why in response he asks the Master of the Faithful why he should not show his affection for him, embrace him, and wipe the perspiration of his face with his own. He is his essence. He is the hoister of the banner of justice and Monotheism, the protector of God's religion and the Prophet's practice, and the Prophet's supporter. He is the Prophet's backer and help in all hardship, the culmination of his message, the custodian of God's law among the different tribes and people until the Day of Resurrection—the one to straighten the tree of Monotheism and the Prophet's authority.

The beginning and end of Anas' *Hadith* both mean that the Master of the Faithful is executor and Imam.

Firstly: in the title the Master of the Faithful, "the Faithful" means all the faithful;

Secondly: "the Chief of the Muslims";

Thirdly: the *qā'id* of the bright white-footed (*al-ghurr al-muḥajjalīn*), meaning the Imam, guide and leader;

Fourthly and most explicitly: the seal of the executors, indicating his status as executor to all matters of prophecy like the executors to all previous Prophets, except that he is more senior and nobler than all of them.

Similarly fulfillment of the Prophet's promises and repayment of his debts, helping his voice reach others, and settling disputes after the Prophet's death all stem from none other than his status as guardian. That is why this *hadith*, as stated above, is considered to be one of the clear instructions making the Master of the Faithful executor and successor.

It is also narrated in similar words and via different chains.

Baḥrānī narrates in *Ghāyah al-Marām* (p. 19)[175] and *al-Manāqib al-Ṣaghīr*, under the heading *Ali wa al-Sunnah*,[176] citing *Manāqib* by Ibn Mardawayh:

قَالَ: كَانَ النَّبِيُّ فِي بَيْتِ أُمِّ حَبِيبَةَ بِنْتِ أَبِي سُفْيَانَ فَقَالَ: يَا أُمَّ حَبِيبَةَ اعْتَزِلِينَا فَإِنَّا عَلَى حَاجَةٍ، ثُمَّ دَعَا بِوَضُوءٍ فَأَحْسَنَ الْوُضُوءَ ثُمَّ قَالَ: إِنَّ أَوَّلَ مَنْ يَدْخُلُ مِنْ هَذَا الْبَابِ أَمِيرُ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ وَسَيِّدُ الْعَرَبِ وَخَيْرُ الْوَصِيِّينَ وَأَوْلَى النَّاسِ بِالنَّاسِ. قَالَ أَنَسٌ: فَجَعَلْتُ أَقُولُ: اللَّهُمَّ اجْعَلْهُ رَجُلًا مِنَ الْأَنْصَارِ. قَالَ: فَدَخَلَ عَلِيٌّ فَجَاءَ يَمْشِي حَتَّى جَلَسَ إِلَى جَنْبِ النَّبِيِّ (رَسُولِ اللهِ فِي نُسْخَةِ الْمَنَاقِبِ) فَجَعَلَ (رَسُولُ اللهِ فِي نُسْخَةِ الْمَنَاقِبِ) يَمْسَحُ وَجْهَهُ بِيَدِهِ ثُمَّ يَمْسَحُ بِهَا وَجْهَ عَلِيِّ بْنِ أَبِي طَالِبٍ، فَقَالَ عَلِيٌّ: وَمَا ذَاكَ يَا رَسُولَ اللهِ؟ قَالَ: أَنْتَ تُبَلِّغُ رِسَالَتِي مِنْ بَعْدِي وَتُؤَدِّي عَنِّي وَتُسْمِعُ النَّاسَ صَوْتِي وَتُعَلِّمُ النَّاسَ مِنْ كِتَابِ اللهِ مَا لَا يَعْلَمُونَ.

The Prophet was in the house of Umm Ḥabībah, the daughter of Abū Sufyān, and said: O Umm Ḥabībah, leave us alone for I am in need. He then called for water for ablutions, performed ablutions well, and said: Surely, the first to come in through this door will be the Master of the Faithful, the Chief of the Arabs, and the best of the executors, and have more authority over people than their own selves.

Anas said: "I started, saying: 'O God, make it one of the supporters.'" He said: "Thereafter, Ali entered and started walking before sitting next to the Prophet (God's Messenger (s), according to the version in *al-Manāqib*)."

He (God's Messenger, according to the version in *al-Manāqib*) began wiping his face with his hand then wiping Ali ibn Abī Ṭālib's face with [the same hand]. So Ali asked: "What is this, God's Messenger?" He answered: "You will pass on my message after I die, fulfill on my behalf, let the people hear my voice, and teach the people what they do not know from God's Book."

Also on page 20, *hadith* number 2, and similarly via his chain of narration on the authority of Ibn Mardawayh's *Manāqib* in *al-Manāqib al-Ṣaghīr*,[177] Baḥrānī narrates on the authority of Anas:

قالَ: بَيْنَا (بَيْنَمَا نسخه مناقب) انَا عِنْدَ النَّبِيِّ (رَسُولِ اللهِ، مناقب) اذ قالَ: الآنَ يَدْخُلُ سَيِّدُ الْمُسْلِمِينَ وَامِيرُ الْمُؤمِنِينَ وَخَيْرُ الْوَصِيِّينَ وَاوْلَى النَّاسِ بِالْمُؤْمِنِينَ (بِالنَّاسِ، مناقب) اذ طَلَعَ عَلِيُّ بْنُ ابِيطالِبٍ، قامَ النَّبِيُّ (فَقالَ رَسُولُ اللهِ: اللّهُمَّ والِ مَنْ والاهُ. وَقالَ: فَجَلَسَ بَيْنَ يَدَىْ رَسُولِ اللهِ، مناقب) فَاخَذَ يَمْسَحُ الْعَرَقَ عَنْ جَبْهَتِهِ وَوَجْهِهِ وَيَمْسَحُ بِهِ وَجْهَ عَلِيِّ بْنِ ابِيطالِبٍ، وَيَمْسَحُ الْعَرَقَ عَنْ وَجْهِ عَلِيٍّ وَيَمْسَحُ بِهِ وَجْهَهُ. فَقالَ لَهُ عَلِيٌّ: يارَسُولَ اللهِ نَزَلَ فِيَّ شَيْءٌ؟ قالَ: اما تَرْضى انْ تَكُونَ مِنِّي بِمَنْزِلَةِ هارُونَ مِنْ مُوسى الّا انَّهُ لانَبِيَّ بَعْدى؟ انْتَ اخى وَوَزِيرى وَخَيْرُ مَنْ اخَلِّفُهُ (اخْلُفُ، مناقب) بَعْدى تَقْضى دَيْنى وَتُنْجِزُ مَوْعِدى وَتُبَيِّنُ لَهُمْ مَا اخْتَلَفُوا فِيهِ بَعْدى وَتُعَلِّمُهُمْ مِنْ تَاوِيلِ الْقُرْآنِ مالَمْ يَعْلَمُوا، وَتُجاهِدُهُمْ عَلَى التَّاوِيلِ كَما جاهَدْتُهُمْ عَلَى التَّنْزِيلِ.

While (*baynā*)—(*baynamā* in the version in *al-Manāqib*)—we were with the Prophet (God's Messenger, *al-Manāqib*), when he said: "Now, the chief of the Muslims, the Master of the Faithful, the best of the executors, and the person with most authority over the believers (the people, *al-Manāqib*) is coming in." Then, Ali arrived and the Prophet stood up, and God's Messenger said: "Be a supporter to whoever supports him." [Anas] said: "Thereafter he sat down before God's Messenger (*al-Manāqib*)".

He then started wiping the sweat from his face and forehead and wiping it onto Ali ibn Abī Ṭālib's face and wiping the sweat off Ali's face and wiping it onto his [own] face. So Ali asked him: "God's Messenger! Has something been revealed about me?" He replied:

> Are you not content to be to me as Aaron was to Moses, except that there is no Prophet after me? You are my brother and vizier, and the best I appoint as successor (*ukhallifuhu*)—(*ukhallif, al-Manāqib*). It is you who will repay my debt, fulfill my covenant, explain to them what they disagree over after I die, teach them the interpretation of the Qur'an they do not know, and fight with them over the interpretation as I have fought them over the revelation.

[Baḥrānī] also narrates in *Ghāyah al-Marām* (*hadith* no 24, 19), on the authority of Ibn 'Abbās, that Anas said:

قالَ رَسُولُ اللهِ: يا انَسُ اسْكُبْ لِي وَضُوءاً اَوْ ماءاً، فَتَوَضّى ثُمَّ انْصَرَفَ فَقالَ: يا انَسُ مَنْ يَدْخُلُ عَلَيَّ الْيَوْمَ امِيرُ الْمُؤمِنينَ وَسَيِّدُ الْمُسْلِمينَ وَخاتَمُ الْوَصِيّينَ وَامامُ الْغُرِّ الْمُحَجَّلينَ. فَجاءَ عَلِيٌّ حَتّى ضَرَبَ الْبابَ فَقالَ: مَنْ هذا يا انَسُ قُلْتُ: هذا عَلِيُّ بْنُ ابيطالِبٍ، قالَ: افْتَحْ لَهُ الْبابَ.

The Messenger of God said: "Pour me some water for ablutions," or "some water." He then performed ablutions, then went away. Thereafter he told me: "He who is coming to see me today is the Master of the Faithful, the chief of the Muslims, the seal of the executors, and the Imam of the bright-faced, white-footed." Then, Ali came and knocked on the door. So [the Messenger] asked: "Who is this, Anas?" I replied: "This is Ali ibn Abī Ṭālib." He said: "Open the door for him."

And in *hadith* number 29, page 20, he says:

وَفِي الْمَناقِبِ عَنْ انَسٍ قالَ: كُنْتُ خادِماً لِلنَّبِيِّ، فَبَيْنَما انَا يَوْماً اَوضِيهِ اذْ قالَ: يَدْخُلُ رَجُلٌ وَهُوَ امِيرُ الْمُؤمِنينَ وَسَيِّدُ الْوَصِيّينَ وَاوْلَى النّاسِ بِالْمُؤمِنينَ وَقائِدُ الْغُرِّ الْمُحَجَّلينَ. قالَ: قُلْتُ: اللّهُمَّ اجْعَلْهُ رَجُلاً مِنَ الْانْصارِ فَاذا هُوَ عَلِيُّ بْنُ ابيطالِبٍ.

Al-Manāqib says that Anas said:

I was the servant of the Prophet. One day, while I was assisting him with ablutions, he said: "A man is coming in who is the Master of the Faithful, the chief of the executors, the person with the most authority over the believers, and the Imam of the bright-faced, white-footed."

[Anas] said: "O God, make it a man from the Anṣār." Lo, it was Ali ibn Abī Ṭālib.

He also writes on the same page:

عَنْ اَنَسِ بْنِ مالِكٍ: قالَ: بَيْنَا النَّبِيُّ صلى الله عليه و آله وسلم اذْ قالَ: يَطْلُعُ الآن، قُلْتُ: فِداكَ ابى وَامّى مَنْ ذا؟ قالَ: سَيِّدُ الْمُسلِمينَ وَامِيرُ الْمُؤمِنينَ وَخَيْرُ الْوَصِيِّينَ وَاوْلَى النّاسِ بِالنَّبِيّينَ. قالَ: فَطَلَعَ عَلِيٌّ، ثُمَّ قالَ لِعَلِيٍّ: اما تَرْضى انْ تَكُونَ مِنّى بِمَنْزِلَةِ هارُونَ مِنْ مُوسى.

Anas ibn Mālik says: "While I was with the Prophet (s), he said: 'He's coming now.' I said: 'May my father and mother be made a sacrifice for you, who is this?' He said: 'The Chief of the Muslims, the Master of the Faithful, the best of the executors and closest person to the Prophets.'" He says: "Then, Ali turned up, and he said to Ali: 'Are you not content to be to me as Aaron was to Moses?'"

Another *hadith* indicating his position as executor is the Transcendent God's words to His Messenger about Ali at the farthest lote-tree where God explained the Imam's words. The Prophet then says:

انَّهُ سَيُخَصُّهُ بِالْبَلاءِ

God will single him out for testing.

This *hadith* has been narrated via two chains: the first is on the authority of the Master of the Faithful; the second is on the authority of Abū Barzah al-Aslamī. Here, we are going to cite both narrations as per the Sunnis.

The first *hadith* is related by Muwaffaq ibn Ahmad Khārazmī in *al-Manāqib* (p. 240), published in Iran, via his chain of narration on the authority of Ghālib Juhanī, on the authority of Abū Ja'far, on the authority of his forefathers, on the authority of the Master of the Faithful that God's Messenger said:

لَمّا اسْرِىَ بى الَى السَّماءِ ثُمَّ مِنَ السَّماءِ الى سِدْرَةِ الْمُنْتَهى وَقَفْتُ بَيْنَ يَدَىْ رَبّى عَزَّوَجَلَّ فَقالَ لى: يا مُحَمَّد، قُلْتُ: لَبَّيْكَ وَسَعْدَيْكَ، قالَ: قَدْ بَلَوْتُ خَلْقى فَايُّهُمْ رَأَيْتَ اطْوَعَ لَكَ؟ قالَ: قُلْتُ: يا رَبِّ عَلِيّاً، قالَ: صَدَقْتَ يا مُحَمَّد، فَهَلِ اتَّخَذْتَ لِنَفْسِكَ خَلِيفَةً تُؤَدّى عَنْكَ وَيُعَلِّمُ عِبادى مِنْ كِتابى مالا يَعْلَمُونَ؟ قالَ: قُلْتُ: يا رَبِّ اخْتَرْ لى فَانَّ خِيَرَتَكَ خِيَرَتى، قالَ: اخْتَرْتُ عَلِيّاً فَاتَّخِذْهُ لِنَفْسِكَ خَلِيفَةً وَوَصِيّاً، وَنَحَلْتُهُ عِلْمى وَحِلْمى، وَهُوَ امِيرُ الْمُؤمِنينَ حَقّاً، لَمْ يَتَلُها احَدٌ قَبْلَهُ وَلَيْسَتْ لِاحَدٍ بَعْدَهُ. يا مُحَمَّد، عَلِيٌّ رايَةُ الْهُدى وَامامُ مَنْ اطاعَنى وَ نُورُ اوْلِيائى، وَهُوَ الْكَلِمَةُ الَّتى الْزَمْتُهَا الْمُتَّقينَ، مَنْ احَبَّهُ فَقَدْ احَبَّنى، وَمَنْ ابْغَضَهُ فَقَدْ ابْغَضَنى، فَبَشِّرْهُ يا مُحَمَّدُ بِذلِكَ. فَقالَ النَّبِيُّ صلى الله عليه و آله وسلم: قُلْتُ: رَبِّ فَقَدْ بَشَّرْتُهُ، فَقالَ: انَا عَبْدُ اللهِ وَفى قَبْضَتِهِ، انْ

يُعاقِبَنِي فَبِذُنُوبِي لَمْ يَظْلِمْنِي شَيْئاً، وَانْ تَمَّمَ لِي وَعْدِي فَانَّهُ مَوْلايَ. قالَ: اجَلْ، قالَ: قُلْتُ: يارَبِّ فَاجْعَلْ قَلْبَهُ وَ اجْعَلْ رَبِيعَهُ الايمانَ. قالَ: قَدْ فَعَلْتُ ذلِكَ بِهِ يامُحَمَّدُ غَيْرَانِّي مُخْتَصٌّ لَهُ بِشَيءٍ مِنَ الْبَلاءِ لَمْ اخُصَّ بِهِ احَداً مِنْ اوْلِيائِي. قالَ: قُلْتُ: يارَبِّ اخِي وَصاحِبِي! قالَ: قَدْ سَبَقَ فِي عِلْمِي انَّهُ مُبْتَلىً، لَوْلا عَلِيٌّ لَمْ يُعْرَفْ حِزْبِي وَلا اوْلِيائِي وَلا اوْلِياءُ رُسُلِي.

The Prophet (s) said:

> When I was taken to Heaven, and then from Heaven to the farthest lote-tree, I stood before my Lord, Mighty and Sublime is He, and He said to me: O Mohammad! I said: At Your service and bidding!
>
> He said: I have tested my creatures, so which of them is most obedient to you?
>
> I replied: "My Lord, Ali."
>
> He replied: Mohammad, you have spoken the truth. So have you chosen a successor to yourself to repay on your behalf and teach My servants what they do not know from My Book?

He says:

> I said: Lord, choose for me because Your choice is my choice.
> He replied:
>
> > I have chosen Ali, so take him as your successor and executor. I have granted him My knowledge and clemency. He truly is the Master of the Faithful—no one has attained this before him and i is not for anyone after him. Mohammad! Ali is the banner of the guidance, the Imam of whoever obeys Me, and the Light of My Friends. He is the Word by which I have bound the pious. Whoever loves him, loves Me, and whoever hates him, hates Me. So, give him the glad tidings of this, Mohammad.

Then, [the Prophet (s)] continued:

> I said: O my Lord, I did give him the glad tidings. He said: "I am God's servant and in His Hands. If He punishes me it is for my sins without His oppressing me at all. If he fulfills the promise to me then he is my Master.
>
> He stated: Yes, indeed!
>
> [The Prophet] says: I said: 'So illuminate his heart and make belief the life of [his heart].'
>
> He said: I have done so, Mohammad, except that I have singled out some tribulation for him which I have not visited upon any of My Friends.

[The Prophet] says: I said: 'My Lord! My brother and my companion!'"

He replied: It is already within My Knowledge that he will be tested—if it were not for Ali, My party, My Friends, and the Friends of My Messengers would not be known.

Baḥrānī also narrates this *hadith* in *Ghāyah al-Marām* (p. 34), under the title "The Eighteenth *Hadith* on the Authority of al-Muwaffaq ibn Ahmad Khārazmī" and there is no difference between these two *hadiths* except in the sentence:

غَيْرَ أَنِّي مُخْتَصٌّ لَهُ بِشَيءٍ مِنَ الْبَلاءِ

which he has written as:

غَيْرَ أَنِّي مُخَصَّصُهُ بِشَيءٍ مِنَ الْبَلاءِ.

Abū Barzah al-Aslami's *hadith* is the same as this one but with the beginning and end omitted. We shall now quote Ḥāfiz Abū Nu'aym Iṣfahānī's *Ḥilyat al-Awliyā'*, (vol. 1, 66), and then discuss it.

Abū Nu'aym narrates via his chain on the authority of Abū Barzah:

قَالَ: قَالَ رَسُولُ اللهِ صلى الله عليه و آله و سلم: انَّ اللهَ عَهِدَ اِلَيَّ عَهْداً فِي عَلِيٍّ فَقُلْتُ: يا رَبِّ بَيِّنْهُ لِي. فَقَالَ: اسْمَعْ، فَقُلْتُ: سَمِعْتُ. فَقَالَ: انَّ عَلِيّاً رايَةُ الْهُدى وَامامُ اَوْلِيائِي وَنورُ مَنْ اَطاعَنِي وَهُوَ الْكَلِمَةُ الَّتِي اَلْزَمْتُهَا الْمُتَّقِينَ، مَنْ اَحَبَّهُ اَحَبَّنِي، وَمَنْ اَبْغَضَهُ اَبْغَضَنِي، فَبَشَّرْتُهُ بِذلِكَ. فَجاءَ عَلِيٌّ فَبَشَّرْتُهُ، فَقَالَ: يا رَسُولَ اللهِ اَنَا عَبْدُ اللهِ وَفِي قَبْضَتِهِ فَاِنْ يُعَذِّبْنِي فَبِذَنْبِي وَاِنْ يُتِمَّ لِيَ الَّذِي بَشَّرْتَنِي بِهِ فَاللهُ اَوْلى بِي. قَالَ: قُلْتُ: اللّهُمَّ اجْعَلْ قَلْبَهُ وَاجْعَلْ رَبِيعَهُ الْايمانَ. فَقَالَ اللهُ: قَدْ فَعَلْتُ بِهِ ذلِكَ. ثُمَّ اَنَّهُ رَفَعَ اِلَيَّ اَنَّهُ خَصَّهُ مِنَ الْبَلاءِ بِشَيءٍ لَمْ يَخُصَّ بِهِ اَحَداً مِنْ اَصْحابِي. فَقُلْتُ: يا رَبِّ اَخِي وَصاحِبِي، فَقَالَ: انَّ هذا شَيءٌ قَدْ سَبَقَ فِي عِلْمِي اَنَّهُ مُبْتَلًى وَمُبْتَلًى بِهِ.

He says:

God's Messenger (s) said: Surely, God made a covenant with me concerning Ali. I said: Lord, explain it to me. So, He said: Listen! I said: I am listening. He then said:

Ali is indeed the banner of the guidance, the Imam of My Friends, and the Light of whoever obeys Me. He is the Word by which I have bound the pious. Whoever loves him, loves Me, and whoever hates him, hates Me. So, give him the good news of that, Mohammad.

Thereupon Ali came and I gave him the good news. He said: :I am God's and in His Hands. If He punishes me, it is for my sins. If he fulfills what you have given me the good news of, God has greater authority over me."

[The Prophet says]

I said: O God, illuminate his heart and make belief the life of [his heart]. God said: I have done so. He then put it to me that He would single him out for testing with something He had not singled out any of my companions, so I said: O my Lord! My brother and companion! He then said: It is already within My Knowledge that he will tested and used to test.

Muhammad ibn Ṭalḥah Shāfi'ī, in *Maṭālib al-Su'ūl* (p. 21), narrates this *hadith* word for word from Ḥāfiẓ Abū Nu'aymIbn Abī al-Ḥadīd al-Mu'tazilī, in *Sharḥ Nahj al-Balāghah* (vol. 2, p. 449, Egypt, 1329) narrates it at the end of:

قَدْ خاضُوا اِبحارَ الْفِتَنِ وَاخَذُوا بِالْبِدَعِ دُونَ السُّنَنِ...

"They had waded into oceans of mischief and adopted innovations instead of traditions."

Of course, Ibn Abī al-Ḥadīd narrates the same words as Abū Nu'aym, which we have quoted from *Ḥilyah al-Awliyā'*.

However, in three different places in *Yanābī' al-Mawaddah* (pp. 78, 79 and 134), Shaykh Sulaymān Qundūzī Ḥanafī narrates:

يارب إنه أخي ووصيي

("My Lord! My brother and my Executor") instead of

يارب إنه أخي وصاحبي

("My Lord! My brother and companion!") from Abū Nu'aym.

So it is not clear whether *al-Ḥilyat* actually said:

وصيّي

("My executor!")

Qundūzī quoted it as it was and it was changed in later editions of *al-Ḥilyah* or it was narrated in two ways in *al-Ḥilyah*: once as

صاحِبي

as related by Ibn Abī al-Ḥadīd and Muhammad ibn Ṭalḥah, and once as:

وصيّي

as narrated by Qundūzī in all three places in his book.

Proof for the first version is what we quoted from Khārazmī's *Manāqib* and *Ghāyat al-Marām*, which says:

صاحِبي.

Proof for the second version is the Transcendent's words:

فَاتَّخِذْهُ لِنَفْسِكَ خَلِيفَةً وَوَصِيّاً.

So take him as your successor and executor,

as per the beginning of the narration in Khārazmī's *al-Manāqib* and *Ghāyat al-Marām*.

A Number of Narrations on the Appointment by God's Messenger of the Master of the Faithful as Executor

They include *hadiths* that indicate that belief depends on Monotheism and belief in prophecy and guardianship, such as the *hadith* narrated by Sulaymān Qundūzī in *Yanābī' al-Mawaddah* (p. 248), as quoted from *"al-Mawaddah al-Rābi'ah"* (*The Fourth Love*) in Mir Sayyid Ali Hamadāni Shāfi'ī's *Mawaddah al-Qurbā* on the authority of 'Utbah ibn 'Āmir al-Juhanī:

قَالَ: بايَعنا رَسُولَ اللهِ صلى الله عليه و آله وسلم عَلى قَولِ انْ لا الهَ الّا اللهُ وَحدَهُ لا شَريكَ لَهُ وَانَّ مُحَمَّداً نَبِيُّهُ وَ عَلِيّاً وَصِيُّهُ، فَاىُّ مِنَ الثَّلاثَةِ تَرَكناهُ كَفَرنا. وَ قالَ لَنَا النَّبِيُّ صلى الله عليه و آله وسلم: احِبُّوا هذا- يَعنى عَلِيّاً- فَانَّ اللهَ يُحِبُّهُ، وَاستَحيُوا مِنهُ فَانَّ اللهَ يَستَحيى مِنهُ.

['Utbah ibn 'Āmir al-Juhanī] says:

> We pledged allegiance to God's Messenger (s) on the basis of saying that there is no god except God alone. He has no partner. Mohammad is His Messenger and Ali is his executor. We fall into disbelief no matter which of these three we abandon. The Prophet (s) said to us, "Love this man," meaning Ali, "because God loves him, and be shy of him because God is shy of him."

In chapter 15 of *Yanābī' al-Mawaddah* (p. 82) it is related from Ṭalḥah ibn Zayd, from Imam Ja'far Ṣādiq, from his forefathers, that the Master of the Faithful, Ali ibn Abī Ṭālib said:

قَالَ رَسُولُ اللهِ صلى الله عليه و آله وسلم: ما قَبَضَ اللهُ نَبِيّاً حَتّى امَرَهُ اللهُ انْ يُوصِيَ الى أَفضَلِ عَشيرَتِهِ مِنْ عُصبَتِهِ، وَامَرَنى انْ اوصِ الَى ابنِ عَمّكَ عَلِيٍّ، اثبَتُّهُ فِى الكُتُبِ السّالِفَةِ وَكَتَبتُ فيها انَّهُ وَصِيُّكَ، وَعَلى ذلِكَ اخَذتُ ميثاقَ الخَلائِقِ وَ ميثاقَ انبيائى وَرُسُلى، وَاخَذتُ مَواثيقَهُم لى بِالرُّبُوبِيَّةِ وَلَكَ بِالنُّبُوَّةِ وَ لِعَلِيِّ بنِ ابيطالِبٍ بِالوِلايَةِ وَالوَصِيَّةِ.

God's Messenger (s) said:

> God did not take any Prophet without commanding him to appoint the best of his clan from his company as executor. He commanded me:
>
> > Appoint your paternal cousin Ali as executor. I have recorded it in the previous scriptures, decreeing therein that he is your executor. On the basis of that I have taken the covenant of all the creatures and the covenant of My Prophets and Messengers.[178] I took their covenants to My being Lord, to your being Prophet, Mohammad and to Ali ibn Abī Ṭālib's being guardian and executor.

They also include *hadiths* that indicate that every Messenger has an heir and executor and that God's Messenger's heir and executor is Ali ibn Abī Ṭālib.

Shaykh Sulaymān Qundūzī narrates in *Yanābī' al-Mawaddah* (p. 86), citing Khārazmī's *Manāqib*, from Muqātil ibn Sulaymān, from Ja'far Ṣādiq, from his ancestors, that Ali ibn Abī Ṭālib said:

قالَ رَسُولُ اللهِ صلى الله عليه و آله وسلم: يا عَلِيُّ انتَ بِمَنزِلَةِ شَيثٍ مِنْ آدَمَ وَبِمَنزِلَةِ سامٍ مِنْ نُوحٍ وَبِمَنزِلَةِ اسحاقَ مِنْ ابراهيمَ كما قالَ تَعالى:

"وَوَصّىٰ بِها ابراهيمُ بَنيهِ وَيَعقُوبُ- الآية"

وَبِمَنزِلَةِ هارُونَ مِنْ مُوسى، وَبِمَنزِلَةِ شَمعُونَ مِنْ عيسى، وَانتَ وَصِيّي وَوارِثي، وَانتَ اقدَمُهُمْ سِلماً وَاكثَرُهُمْ عِلماً وَاوفَرُهُمْ حِلماً وَاشجَعُهُمْ قَلباً وَاسخاهُمْ كَفّاً، وَانتَ امامُ امّتي وَقسيمُ الجَنَّةِ وَالنارِ، بِمَحَبَّتِكَ يُعرَفُ الأَبرارُ مِنَ الفُجّارِ وَيُمَيَّزُ بَينَ المُؤمِنينَ وَالمُنافِقينَ وَالكُفّارِ.

God's Messenger (s) said:

> Ali, you are to me as Seth was to Adam, as Sam was to Noah, as Isaac was to Abraham, as the Transcendent says: *And this was the legacy that Abraham left to his sons, and so did Jacob* (2:132), as Aaron was to Moses, and Simon was to Jesus. You are my executor and heir. You were the first of them to accept, and the most knowledgeable of them, most tolerant of them, most brave-hearted of them, and most generous-handed of them. You are the Imam of my nation; you are the division between Heaven and Hell. Through love for you, the good are known from the wicked, and the believers are distinguished from the hypocrites and unbelievers.

In this *hadith*, God's Messenger firstly explains that every one of the previous Prophets, such as Adam, Noah, Abraham, Moses, and Jesus, had an executor. [Paraphrasing:] "I, too, am a Prophet of God, so I shall have an executor. You are my executor guardian because of that, Ali, because the principle of appointing an executor is a Divine custom that should be practiced by all Prophets. I, too, will not break that custom."

Secondly [paraphrasing the *hadith*], the Prophet's executor should be the earliest Muslim and believer, most knowledgeable, most tolerant, most brave-hearted, and most generous-handed. Because you have all those attributes, Ali, and you are the best at them, God has made you the Imam of my nation. Based on this correct criterion, Heaven is known from Hell in terms of the levels of believers—your followers—and rebels against your guardianship. Their dwellings will be commensurate with their various levels. Through love for you, the good will be known from the wicked and the believers will be distinguished from the hypocrites and unbelievers.'

Moreover, in the same book (p. 248), within *"al-Mawaddah al-Rābi'ah"* ("The Fourth Love") Sayyid Ali Shāfi'ī Hamadānī narrates that the Master of the Faithful narrated from the Prophet:

انَّ اللهَ تعالى جَعَلَ لِكُلِّ نَبِيٍّ وَصِيّاً، جَعَلَ شَيْثاً وَصِيَّ آدَمَ وَيُوشَعَ وَصِيَّ مُوسى وَشَمْعُونَ وَصِيَّ عيسى وَ عَلِيّاً وَصِيِّي، وَوَصِيِّي خَيْرُ الْاَوصياءِ فِي الْبداءِ، وَانَا الدّاعى وَهُوَ الْمُضِيء.

The Transcendent God appointed an executor for every Messenger: He made Seth Adam's executor, Joshua Moses' executor, Simon Jesus' executor, and Ali my executor. My executor is the best executor to appear—I am the inviter and he is the illuminator.

Page 79 says, also via the author's chain of transmission on the authority of Muwaffaq ibn Ahmad Khārazmī, that Umm Salamah said:

قالَ رَسُولُ اللهِ صلى الله عليه و آله وسلم: انَّ اللهَ اخْتارَ مِنْ كُلِّ نَبِيٍّ وَصِيّاً، وَ عَلِيٌّ وَصِيِّي فى عِتْرَتى وَاَهْلِ بَيْتى وَامَّتى بَعْدى.

God's Messenger said: God chose an executor for every Prophet. Ali is my executor among my close family, my household and my nation after I die.

Qundūzī, after relating this *hadith*, says: "Khārazmī has also relates a similar *hadith*." The Shaykh of Islam Ḥamwīnī relates the *hadith* on appointment of executors from Ali ibn Mūsā.

Another example is what the book *'Alī wa al-Waṣiyyah* (p. 226) says, citing Khārazmī's *Manāqib* via his chain of narration from Abū al-Qāsim 'Abdullāh ibn Muhammad ibn 'Abd al-'Azīz Baghawī, from Ḥamīd Rāzī, from Ali ibn Mujāhid, from Muhammad ibn Isḥāq, from Shurayk ibn 'Abdullāh, from Abū Rubay'ah al-Iyādi, from Ibn Buraydah that his father Buraydah related:

قالَ رَسُولُ اللهِ صلى الله عليه و آله وسلم: لِكُلِّ نَبِيٍّ وَصِيٌّ وَوارِثٌ، وَانَّ عَلِيّاً وَصِيِّي وَوارِثى.

God's Messenger (s) said: Every Prophet has an executor and heir. My executor and heir is Ali.

This prophetic *hadith* is related by Muḥib al-Dīn Ṭabarī in *Dhakhā'ir al-'Uqbā* (p. 71), quoting *Mu'jam al-Ṣaḥābah* by Ḥāfiẓ Abū al-Qāsim Baghawī, on the authority of Buraydah, in *al-Riyāḍ al-Naḍrah* on the

authority of Buraydah, by al-Ganjī al-Shāfi'ī in *Kifāyah al-Ṭālib* (p. 131), 'Abd al-Ra'ūf Manaw, (d. 1031 A.H.) in his book *Kunūz al-Ḥaqā'iq fī Ḥadīth Khayr al-Khalā'iq* published as marginal notes to *al-Jāmi' al-Ṣaghīr* (p. 69) by Suyūṭī. Shaykh Sulaymān Qundūzī narrates it in *Yanābī' al-Mawaddah* (p. 207) citing *Mu'jam al-Ṣaḥābah* by Abū al-Qāsim al-Baghawī, on the authority of Daylamī, the author of *Ferdaus al-Akhbār* on pages 180 and 232 and from Muwaffaq ibn Ahmad Khārazmī, on page 79. It is also related on page 248 in the fourth "*Mawaddah*" of *Mawaddah al-Qurbā*.

Another *hadith* is cited by Ḥamwīnī in *Farā'id al-Simṭayn* (vol. 2, chapter 31). 'Allāmah Baḥrānī relates it on page 39, under the heading "*Hadith* 36," and Qundūzī Ḥanafī relates it in *Yanābī' al-Mawaddah* (p. 44). It is narrated from Ibn 'Abbās concerning the coming of Na'thal, the Jew, to the Prophet to ask him about God's attributes and Names, and about the Prophet's executors. This *hadith* is extremely long, so we shall only quote the paragraph on the appointment of an executor.

قَالَ (اىَ نَعْثَلُ الْيَهُودِيُّ): فَاخْبِرْنِي عَنْ وَصِيِّكَ مَنْ هُوَ؟ فَمَا مِنْ نَبِيٍّ إِلَّا وَلَهُ وَصِيٌّ وَإِنَّ نَبِيَّنَا مُوسَى بْنَ عِمْرَانَ أَوْصَى إِلَى يُوشَعَ بْنِ نُونٍ، فَقَالَ: نَعَمْ إِنَّ وَصِيِّي وَالْخَلِيفَةَ بَعْدِي عَلِيُّ بْنُ أَبِي طَالِبٍ وَبَعْدَهُ سِبْطَايَ الْحَسَنُ وَالْحُسَيْنُ يَتْلُوهُ تِسْعَةٌ مِنْ صُلْبِ الْحُسَيْنِ أَئِمَّةٌ أَبْرَارٌ ـ الحديث.

> The Jew said: Inform me of your executor because no Prophet fails to have an executor. In fact, our Prophet, Moses, appointed Joshua son of Nun as executor. He replied: Right, my executor and the caliph after me is Ali ibn Abī Ṭālib, and after him my two grandsons, Hasan and Ḥusayn, then after Ḥusayn, follow nine good Imams from Ḥusayn's loins...[179]

Another *hadith* about appointment of an executor is Salmān Farsi's, who asked the Prophet who his successor was. In answer to his question, he said: "O Salmān, do you know who Moses' executor was?" He replied: "Yes, Joshua son of Nun." He then said: "O Salmān, know that my executor, heir, brother, vizier, and the best I appoint as successor after I die will fulfill my covenant and repay my debt—Ali ibn Abī Ṭālib (as)."

Most Shi'a and Sunni scholars have put this *hadith* in their books, and the greatest Sunni scholars have confirmed it as authentic. However, as this *hadith* is narrated via various chains, and generally worded differently, we shall cite it word for word from books respected by the majority.

Salmān Farsi's *Hadith* on the Appointment of an Executor

'Allāmah Baḥrānī narrates in his *al-Manāqib al-Ṣaghīr* known as *Ali wa al-Sunnah* (p. 57) that Abū Sa'īd al-Khudrī said:

انَّ سَلْمانَ قالَ: قُلْتُ لِرَسُولِ اللهِ صلى الله عليه و آله وسلم: لِكُلِّ نَبِيٍّ وَصِيٌّ فَمَنْ وَصِيُّكَ؟ فَسَكَتَ عَنِّي فَلَمّا كانَ بَعْدُ رَآنِي فَقالَ: يا سَلْمانُ، فَاَسْرَعْتُ اِلَيْهِ وَقُلْتُ: لَبَّيْكَ، قالَ: تَعْلَمُ مَنْ وَصِيُّ مُوسى؟ قُلْتُ: نَعَمْ يُوشَعُ بْنُ نُونٍ، قالَ: لِمَ قُلْتَ؟ قُلْتُ: لِاَنَّهُ كانَ اَعْلَمَهُم يَوْمَئِذٍ، قالَ: فَاِنَّ وَصِيِّي وَمَوْضِعَ سِرِّي وَخَيْرَ مَنْ اَخْلُفُ بَعْدي، يُنْجِزُ مَوْعِدي وَيَقْضي دَيْني، عَلِيُّ بْنُ ابيطالِبٍ.

Salmān says:

> I said to God's Messenger (s): "Every Prophet has an executor, so who is your executor?" He did not answer me, but when he saw that I was still there he said: "O Salmān," so I hurried to him and said: "At your service." He then asked: "Do you know who Moses' executor was?" I replied: "Yes, Joshua son of Nun." So he asked: "Why did you say so?" I replied: "Because he was the most learned among them at that time." He said: "Verily my executor, the repository of my secret, and the best I appoint as successor after I die will fulfill my covenant and repay my debt—Ali ibn Abī Ṭālib."

In this *hadith*, the Prophet tests Salmān, asking him why Joshua son of Nun became Moses' executor, and he replied that because he was the most knowledgeable in his nation at that time, he became Moses' executor. In this conversation, the Prophet wants to point out that a Messenger's executor must be the most knowledgeable person of his time. He must be the best at understanding religious issues, the Divine knowledge, the religion's symbols and secrets. That is why he says: "Verily my executor, the repository of my secret, the best I appoint as successor after I die will fulfill my covenant and repay my debt" and is worthy of bearing this difficult task—"Ali ibn Abī Ṭālib."

Also in this book (p. 58), *al-Manāqib* is cited, which quotes Ibn Mardawayh as saying that Anas said that Salmān said:

قلْتُ لِرَسُولِ اللهِ صلى الله عليه و آله وسلم: عَمَّنْ تَأْخُذُ بَعْدَكَ وَبِمَنْ نَثِقُ؟ قالَ: فَسَكَتَ عَنّي حَتّى سَأَلْتُ ذلِكَ عَشْراً، ثُمَّ قالَ: يا سَلْمانُ، اِنَّ وَصِيّي وَخَليفَتي وَاَخي وَوَزيري وَخَيْرَ مَنْ اَخْلُفُهُ بَعْدي عَلِيُّ بْنُ اَبي طالِبٍ، يُؤَدّي عَنّي وَيُنْجِزُ مَوْعِدي.

> I asked God's Messenger: 'From whom should we take after you die and whom should we trust?' He says: He did not answer me until I had asked that ten times. He then said: 'O Salmān, verily my executor, brother, vizier,

and best I appoint as successor after I die is Ali ibn Abī Ṭālib. He will repay on my behalf and fulfill my covenant.'

Moreover, Muḥib al-Dīn Ṭabarī says in *al-Riyāḍ al-Naḍrah* (vol. 2, p. 178), after Buraydah's *hadith*:

عَنْ اَنَسٍ قَالَ: قُلْنا لِسَلْمانَ: سَلِ النَّبِيَّ صلى الله عليه و آله وسلم مَنْ وَصِيه؟ فَقالَ سَلْمانُ: يا رَسُولَ اللهِ، مَنْ وَصِيكَ؟ قالَ: يا سَلْمانُ مَنْ كانَ وَصِيَّ مُوسى؟ قالَ: يُوشَعُ بْنُ نُونٍ، قالَ: فَاِنَّ وَصِيِّي وَوارِثِي، يَقْضى دَيْنِي وَ يُنْجِزُ مَوْعِدى عَلِيُّ بْنُ ابيطالِب.

Anas said:

> We said to Salmān: Ask the Prophet (s) who his executor is. So Salmān asked: "O God's Messenger, who is your executor? He said: O Salmān, who was Moses' executor?" Salmān replied: Joshua son of Nun. [The Prophet] said: Verily, my executor and heir will repay my debt and fulfill my covenant—Ali ibn Abī Ṭālib.

Ahmad ibn Ḥanbal cites this in *al-Manāqib*.

Sibṭ ibn Jawzī mentions this very *hadith* of Ṭabarī's in *al-Tadhkirah* (p. 26); he considers it to be authentic and challenges whoever considers it to be weak. To sum up, the reason some consider the *hadith* to be weak is because of Ismā'īl ibn Ziyādah in the chain of narration, who is criticized by al-Dārquṭnī; the reason for this criticism is the extra part at the end:

وهو خير من اترك بعدي.

...and he is the best I leave behind me.

Then, he says: "However, this extra phrase is not in this *hadith* we have mentioned; we have quoted it from Ahmad ibn Ḥanbal; Ismā'īl ibn Ziyādah is not in his chain of narration—this is a different *hadith*."

However, in another book called *Dhakhā'ir al-'Uqbā* (p. 71), Muḥib al-Dīn Ṭabarī only cites the end of Salmān's *hadith*; he says:

Anas related it from the Prophet (s):

قالَ: رَوى اَنَسٌ اَنَّ النَّبِيَّ صلى الله عليه و آله وسلم قالَ: وَصِيِّي وَوارِثِي يَقْضى دَيْنِي وَيُنْجِزُ مَوْعِدى عَلِيُّ بْنُ ابيطالِب.

...my executor and heir. He will repay my debt and fulfill my covenant—Ali ibn Abī Ṭālib.

Then, he says: "Ahmad ibn Ḥanbal cites this *hadith* in *al-Manāqib*."

Ibn Shahr Āshūb also mentions this *hadith* in *al-Manāqib* (vol. 1, p. 542). Firstly, he has related it via Ṭabarī's chain of narration from Salmān:

قَالَ: قُلْتُ لِرَسُولِ اللهِ: يَا رَسُولَ اللهِ أَنَّهُ لَمْ يَكُنْ نَبِيٌّ إِلَّا وَلَهُ وَصِيٌّ، فَمَنْ وَصِيُّكَ؟ قَالَ: وَصِيِّي وَخَلِيفَتِي فِي أَهْلِي وَخَيْرُ مَنْ أَتْرُكُ بَعْدِي، مُؤَدِّي دَيْنِي وَمُنْجِزُ عِدَاتِي عَلِيُّ بْنُ أَبِي طَالِبٍ

He said:

> I asked God's Messenger: "God's Messenger, there has never been a Prophet who has not had an executor, so who is your executor?" He replied: "My executor and successor in my family, and the best I leave behind me, will repay my debt and fulfill my promises—Ali ibn Abī Ṭālib."

The second is from Muṭīr ibn Khālid quoting Anas, Qays ibn Mānāh and 'Ibadah ibn 'Abdullāh all on the authority of Salmān, that they, i.e. Anas and Salmān, both said:

The Prophet said:

يَا سَلْمَانُ؛ سَأَلْتَنِي مَنْ وَصِيِّي مِنْ أُمَّتِي، فَهَلْ تَدْرِي لِمَنْ كَانَ أَوْصَى إِلَيْهِ مُوسَى عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ؟ قُلْتُ: اللهُ وَرَسُولُهُ أَعْلَمُ. قَالَ: أَوْصَى إِلَى يُوشَعَ لِأَنَّهُ كَانَ أَعْلَمَ أُمَّتِهِ، وَوَصِيِّي وَأَعْلَمُ أُمَّتِي بَعْدِي عَلِيُّ بْنُ أَبِي طَالِبٍ

> "O Salmān, you have asked me who my executor from my nation will be, so do you know whom Moses (as) appointed as executor?" I replied: "God and His Messenger know best." He said: "He appointed Joshua as executor because he was the most knowledgeable in his nation. My executor is the most knowledgeable in my nation after me—Ali ibn Abī Ṭālib.

Shaykh Sulaymān Qundūzī also relates it in chapter fifteen of *Yanābī' al-Mawaddah*, from Ahmad ibn Ḥanbal's *Musnad*, via his chain of narration from Anas ibn Mālik, who said:

قَالَ: قُلْنَا لِسَلْمَانَ: سَلِ النَّبِيَّ صلى الله عليه و آله وسلم عَنْ وَصِيِّهِ، فَقَالَ سَلْمَانُ: يَا رَسُولَ اللهِ مَنْ وَصِيُّكَ؟ فَقَالَ: يَا سَلْمَانُ، مَنْ وَصِيُّ مُوسى؟ فَقَالَ: يُوشَعُ بْنُ نُونٍ. قَالَ صلى الله عليه و آله وسلم: وَصِيِّي وَوَارِثِي يَقْضِي دَيْنِي وَيُنْجِزُ وَعْدِي عَلِيُّ بْنُ ابِيطَالِبٍ.

We said to Salmān: "Ask the Prophet (s) about his executor." So Salmān asked: "God's Messenger, who is your successor?" He replied: "Salmān! Who was Moses' executor?" So [Salmān] replied: "Joshua son of Nun." He (s) said: "My executor and heir will repay my debt and fulfill my covenant—Ali ibn Abī Ṭālib."

And then, he says:

Tha'labī narrates the *hadith* on the appointment of an executor, which concerns Ali ibn Abī Ṭālib, from al-Barā' ibn 'Āzib in his exegesis at the end of verse:

وَأَنْذِرْ عَشِيرَتَكَ الْأَقْرَبِينَ

And warn your closest relations. (26:214)

Ibn al-Maghāzilī narrates this *hadith* via his chains of narration from Ibn 'Abbās and Jābir ibn 'Abdullāh al-Anṣārī, Buraydah and Abū Ayyūb al-Anṣārī.

On page 231 of *Yanābī' al-Mawaddah,* this *hadith* is cited on the authority of Ahmad ibn Ḥanbal on the authority of Anas as one of seventy virtues the Master of the Faithful had.

Every Prophet Has an Executor

Also cited on page 253, in the seventh "*Mawaddah*" of *Mawaddah al-Qurbā* on the authority of 'Abdullāh ibn 'Umar is:

قَالَ: مَرَّ سَلْمَانُ الْفَارِسِيُّ وَهُوَ يُرِيدُ أَنْ يَعُودَ رَجُلًا وَنَحْنُ جُلُوسٌ فِي حَلْقَةٍ وَفِينَا رَجُلٌ يَقُولُ: لَوْ شِئْتُ لَأَنْبَأْتُكُمْ بِأَفْضَلِ هَذِهِ الْأُمَّةِ بَعْدَ نَبِيِّهَا وَأَفْضَلَ مِنْ هَذَيْنِ الرَّجُلَيْنِ أَبِي بَكْرٍ وَعُمَرَ، فَسُئِلَ سَلْمَانُ فَقَالَ: أَمَا وَاللهِ لَوْ شِئْتُ لَأَنْبَأْتُكُمْ.

بِأَفْضَلِ هَذِهِ الْأُمَّةِ بَعْدَ نَبِيِّهَا وَأَفْضَلَ مِنْ هَذَيْنِ الرَّجُلَيْنِ أَبِي بَكْرٍ وَعُمَرَ. ثُمَّ مَضَى سَلْمَانُ فَقِيلَ لَهُ: يَا أَبَا عَبْدِ اللهِ مَا قُلْتَ؟ قَالَ: دَخَلْتُ عَلَى رَسُولِ اللهِ صلى الله عليه و آله وسلم فِي غَمَرَاتِ الْمَوْتِ فَقُلْتُ: يَا رَسُولَ اللهِ هَلْ أَوْصَيْتَ؟ قَالَ: يَا سَلْمَانُ: أَتَدْرِي مَنِ الْأَوْصِيَاءُ؟ قُلْتُ: اللهُ وَرَسُولُهُ أَعْلَمُ. قَالَ: آدَمُ وَكَانَ وَصِيُّهُ شِيثٌ وَكَانَ أَفْضَلَ مَنْ تَرَكَهُ بَعْدَهُ مِنْ وُلْدِهِ، وَكَانَ وَصِيُّ نُوحٍ سَامٌ وَكَانَ أَفْضَلَ مَنْ تَرَكَهُ بَعْدَهُ، وَكَانَ وَصِيُّ

مُوسى يُوشَعُ وَكَانَ افْضَلَ مَنْ تَرَكَهُ بَعْدَهُ، وَكَانَ وَصِيُّ عِيسى شَمْعُونُ بْنُ فَرْخِيا وَكَانَ افْضَلَ مَنْ تَرَكَهُ بَعْدَهُ، وَ انِّي اوْصَيْتُ الى عَلِيٍّ وَهُوَ افْضَلُ مَنْ اتْرُكُهُ مِنْ بَعْدى.

And he has related the very *hadith* in *'Alī wa al-Waṣiyyah* (p. 366), from *al-Kawkab al-Durri* by Sayyid Muhammad Ṣāliḥ al-Tirmidhi, on page 105, by his chains from 'Umar ibn Khattāb.

However, he does not include the sentence:

فَسُئِلَ سَلْمانُ فَقالَ: اما وَاللهِ لَوْ شِئْتُ لَأَنْبَأْتُكُمْ بِأَفْضَلَ مِنْ هذِهِ الْأُمَّةِ

Salmān was then asked, so he replied: "By God, if I like I will tell you who the best of this nation is,"

but does include:

ووصيّ سليمان اصف بن برخيا

And Solomon appointed Barkhyā as executor.

'Abdullāh ibn 'Umar, as well as 'Umar himself, said:

> Salmān Farsi was passing by us on his way to visit a sick man while we were sitting in circle. A man among us was saying: "If I like, I can tell you who the best in this nation is after its Prophet—better than these two men: Abū Bakr and 'Umar." The question was put to Salmān and so he replied: "By God, if I like, I can tell you who the best in this nation is after the Messenger—better than these two men, Abū Bakr and 'Umar." Salmān then walked on so he was asked: "Abū 'Abdullāh, what did you say?"
>
> He replied:
>
> > I went to see God's Messenger (s) in his mortal throes and asked: "God's Messenger, have you appointed an executor?" He replied: "Salmān, do you know who the executors are?" I replied: "God and His Messenger know best!" He said: "Adam, and his executor was Seth. He was the best whom he left behind out of his children. Noah's executor was Shem and he was the best he left behind. Moses' executor was Joshua and he was the best he left behind. Jesus' executor was Simon son of Barkhyā and he was the best he left behind. I appoint Ali as executor, and he is the best I leave behind."

Ali and I Were a Light before God, Mighty and Sublime Is He, before He Created Adam

They also include the *hadiths* that indicate that God assigned prophecy to Mohammad and executorship to Ali, such as the *hadith* in *Yanābī' al-Mawaddah* (p. 256).

عُثمان رَفَعَهُ: خُلِقتُ انَا وَ عَلِيٌّ مِن نورٍ واحِدٍ قَبلَ انْ يَخلُقَ اللهُ آدَمَ بارْبَعَةِ آلافِ عامٍ فَلَمّا خَلَقَ اللهُ آدَمَ رَكَّبَ ذلِكَ النُّورَ فى صُلبِهِ فَلَم يَزَلْ شَيئاً واحِداً حَتّى افتَرَقْنا فى صُلبِ عَبدِ المُطَّلِبِ، فَفِيَّ النُّبُوَّةُ وَ فى عَلِيٍّ الوَصِيَّةُ..

'Uthmān ascribes it [to the Prophet]:

> Ali and I were created from a single light four thousand years before God created Adam. Then, when God created Adam, He put that light in [Adam's] loins. It remained as a single entity until we separated in the loins of 'Abd al-Muṭṭalib, so prophecy is in me and executorship is in Ali.

Also on the same page he says:

عَنْ عَلِيٍّ عليه السلام قالَ: قالَ رَسُولُ اللهِ صلى الله عليه و آله وسلم: يا عَلِيُّ خَلَقَنِيَ اللهُ وَ خَلَقَكَ مِن نُورِهِ، فَلَمّا خَلَقَ آدَمَ عليه السلام اوْدَعَ ذلِكَ النُّورَ فى صُلبِهِ فَلَم نَزَلْ انَا وَ انْتَ شَيئاً واحِداً، ثُمَّ افتَرَقْنا فى صُلبِ عَبدِ المُطَّلِبِ، فَفِيَّ النُّبُوَّةُ وَ الرِّسالَةُ، وَ فيكَ الوَصِيَّةُ وَ الامامَةُ..

The Master of the Faithful says that God's Messenger (s) said:

> O Ali, God created me and you from His light, then, when He created Adam (as), He put that light in [Adam's] loins; we remained a single entity and then separated in the loins of 'Abd al-Muṭṭalib, so prophecy and the Message is in me and the executorship and Imamate is in you.

Moreover it is said in *Sharḥ Nahj al-Balāghah* by Ibn Abī al-Ḥadīd, (vol. 2, p, 450):

الحديث الرابع عشر: قالَ صلى الله عليه و آله وسلم: كُنتُ انَا وَ عَلِيٌّ نُوراً بَينَ يَدَيِ اللهِ عَزَّ وَ جَلَّ قَبلَ انْ يَخلُقَ آدَمَ بِاربَعَةَ عَشَرَ الْفَ عامٍ فَلَمّا خَلَقَ آدَمَ قَسَّمَ ذلِكَ فيهِ وَ جَعَلَهُ جُزْئَيْنِ فَجُزْءٌ انَا وَ جُزْءٌ عَلِيٌّ..

> *Hadith* 14: He (s) said: "Ali and I were a single light before God, Mighty and Sublime is He, fourteen thousand years before He created Adam, then, when He created Adam, He divided [the light] in him and made it two parts: one part, me and one part, Ali."

Then, he adds, Ahmad ibn Ḥanbal relates this *hadith* in his *Musnad* and also in *Faḍā'il 'Alī*.

The author of *al-Ferdaus* also relates this *hadith*, but adds a sentence:

ثُمَّ انتَقَلْنا حَتّى صِرْنا فى عَبْدِ الْمُطَّلِبِ، فَكانَ لِىَ النُّبُوَّةُ وَلِعَلِىٍّ الْوَصِيَّةُ.

"Then, we moved on until we were inside 'Abd al-Muṭṭalib, so prophecy is in me and the executorship is in Ali."

They also include *hadiths* that say that Gabriel gave the Prophet the news of the Master of the Faithful's executorship.

Muwaffaq ibn Khārazmī relates in *al-Manāqib* (p. 223, chapter 19), from Muhammad ibn Ahmad ibn Shādhān and Muhammad ibn Ali ibn Faḍl al-Zayyāt, from Ali ibn Badī' al-Mājashūnī, from Ismā'īl ibn Abān al-Warrāq, from Ghiyāth ibn Ibrāhīm, from Ja'far ibn Muhammad, from his father, from Ali ibn Ḥusayn, from his father (as):

قالَ رَسُولُ اللهِ صلى الله عليه و آله وسلم نَزَلَ عَلَىَّ جَبْرَئيلُ عليه السلام صَبيحَةَ يَوْمٍ فَرِحاً مَسْروراً مُسْتَبْشِراً، فَقُلْتُ: حَبيبى مالِى اراكَ فَرِحاً مُسْتَبْشِراً؟ قالَ: يا مُحَمَّدُ وَكَيْفَ لا أَكُونُ فَرِحاً مُسْتَبْشِراً وَقَدْ قَرَّتْ عَيْنى بِما اكْرَمَ اللهُ اخاكَ وَوَصِيَّكَ وَامامَ امَّتِكَ عَلِىَّ بْنَ ابى طالِبٍ عليه السلام. فَقُلْتُ: وَبِمَ اكْرَمَ اللهُ اخى وَوَصِيِّى وَ امامَ امَّتى؟ قالَ: باهَى اللهُ بِعِبادَتِهِ الْبارِحَةَ مَلائِكَتَهُ وَحَمَلَةَ عَرْشِهِ وَقالَ: مَلائِكَتى انْظُرُوا الى حُجَّتى فى ارْضى عَلى عِبادى بَعْدَ نَبِيِّى مُحَمَّدٍ فَقَدْ عَفَّرَ خَدَّهُ بِالتُّرابِ تَواضُعاً لِعَظَمَتى، اشْهِدُكُمْ اَنَّهُ امامُ خَلْقى وَمَوْلى بَرِيَّتى..

God's Messenger (s) said:

> One morning, Gabriel came down rejoicing merrily, so I asked: "My beloved, why do I see you rejoicing merrily?" He said: "O Mohammad! How can I not be rejoicing merrily? My eye has been delighted by what God has bestowed upon your brother and executor and the leader of your nation, 'Alī ibn Abī Ṭālib (as)." I asked: "What has God bestowed on my brother and executor and the leader of my nation?" He said:
>
> > God boasted to His angels, the bearers of his Throne about his worship yesterday. He said:
> >
> > > O My angels, look at My Proof on My earth, over My servants after My Messenger, Mohammad, for he has covered his cheek in dust, humbling himself before My Greatness! I

call you to witness that he is the Leader of My creatures, and the Master of My creation!

Qundūzī Ḥanafī narrates this *hadith* slightly differently in *Yanābī' al-Mawaddah* (pp. 79, 127), from Khārazmī, from Ghiyāth ibn Ibrāhīm via the same chain of transmission.

In *al-Manāqib* (vol. 1, p. 543), Ibn Shahr Āshūb narrates from Ibn 'Abbās that the Prophet said:

انَّ جَبْرَئِيلَ نَظَرَ الى عَلِيٍّ فَقَالَ: هذا وَصِيُّك.

"Gabriel looked at Ali and said: 'This is your executor.'"

The *Hadith* That Say That Ali (as) Was the Successor, Vizier and Repayer of the Messenger's Debts in the Nation

They also include prophetic *hadiths* that say that Ali is the successor, vizier, caliph, heir, fulfiller of the Prophet's covenant, and repayer of his debts in the nation after his death. As these *hadiths* are also related by great scholars via various chains, and are worded differently, we shall cite many of them along with their sources.

Ḥamwīnī narrates via his chain of transmission in *Farā'id al-Simṭayn* (vol. 2, chapter 8), a lengthy *hadith* from Sa'īd ibn Jubayr, from Ibn 'Abbās from the Prophet. Part of what he relates is:

امّا عَلِيُّ بْنُ ابى طالِبٍ فَانَّه اخى وَشَقيقى وَصاحِبُ الأمرِ بَعدى وَصاحِبُ لِوائى فِى الدُّنيا وَالآخِرَةِ وَصاحِبُ حَوضى وَشَفاعَتى، وَهُوَ وَلِيُّ كُلِّ مُسلِمٍ وَامامُ كُلِّ مُؤمِنٍ وَقائِدُ كُلِّ تَقِيٍّ، وَهُوَ وَصِيّى وَخَليفَتى عَلى اهلى وَ امَّتى فى حَياتى وَبَعدَ مَوتى وَمُبغِضُهُ مُبغِضى وَبِوِلايَتِهِ صارَتْ امَّتى مَرحُومَةً وَبِعَداوَتِهِ صارَتِ المُخالِفَةُ لَهُ مَلعُونَةً.

As for Ali ibn Abī Ṭālib, he is my brother, full sibling, my *chargé d'affaires* after I die, my standard-bearer in this world and the Hereafter, in charge of my Pool and my intercession. He is the master of every Muslim, Imam of every believer, and leader of every pious person. He is my executor and deputy (*khalīfatī*) in charge of my offspring and nation within my lifetime and after my death. Whoever loves him loves me and whoever hates him hates me. My nation became blessed through his guardianship and any opponent to him becomes cursed through his enmity towards him.'

'Allāmah Baḥrānī narrates in *al-Manāqib al-Ṣaghīr* from *al-Wasīlah*, which contains commentary by 'Allāmah Shaykh Aḥmad ibn Faḍl ibn

Muḥammad ibn Bākthīr al-Makkī al-Shāfi'ī from Anas ibn Mālik that God's Messenger said:

قَالَ: انَّ خَلِيلِي وَوَزِيرِي وَخَلِيفَتِي وَخَيْرَ مَنْ اتْرُكُ بَعْدِي يَقْضِي دَيْنِي وَيُنْجِزُ مَوْعِدِي عَلِيُّ بْنُ ابِي طَالِبٍ.

"Indeed, my friend, vizier, caliph and the best whom I leave behind me will repay my debt and fulfill my promises—Ali ibn Abī Ṭālib."

The author of *'Alī wa al-Waṣiyyah* (p. 109) narrates from Ibn al-Maghāzilī al-Shāfi'ī's *al-Manāqib* via his chain from Nāfi, 'Abdullāh ibn 'Umar's freeman:

قَالَ: قُلْتُ لِابْنِ عُمَرَ: مَنْ خَيْرُ النَّاسِ بَعْدَ رَسُولِ اللهِ؟ قَالَ: ما انْتَ وَذا، لا امَّ لَكَ؟ ثُمَّ اسْتَغْفَرَ اللهَ وَقَالَ: خَيْرُهُمْ بَعْدَهُ مَنْ كَانَ يَحِلُّ لَهُ ما يَحِلُّ لَهُ، وَيَحْرُمُ عَلَيْهِ ما يَحْرُمُ عَلَيْهِ. قُلْتُ: مَنْ هُوَ؟ قَالَ: عَلِيُّ بْنُ ابِي طَالِبٍ، سَدَّ ابْوابَ الْمَسْجِدِ وَتَرَكَ بابَ عَلِيٍّ وَقَالَ لَهُ: لَكَ فِي هذَا الْمَسْجِدِ مالِي وَعَلَيْكَ فِيهِ ما عَلَيَّ، وَانْتَ وارِثِي وَوَصِيِّي تَقْضِي دَيْنِي وَتُنْجِزُ عِداتِي وَتُقْتَلُ عَلى سُنَّتِي، كَذَبَ مَنْ زَعَمَ انَّهُ يُبْغِضُكَ وَيُحِبُّنِي.

I asked Ibn 'Umar: "Who is the best person after God's Messenger?" He replied: "What business is that of yours, motherless one?" He then begged God's forgiveness and said: "The best of them after him is he for whom what was lawful for him is lawful for him, and what was unlawful for him is unlawful for him." Then, I asked: "Who is it?" He answered:

> Ali ibn Abī Ṭālib. The doors to the mosque were locked but Ali's door was left. [The Prophet] told him:
>
> > You are allowed what I am allowed in the mosque and you have to do what I have to do. You are my heir and executor. You will repay my debt, fulfill my promises and kill over my tradition. Whoever claims to hate you but love me is lying!

In *Farā'id al-Simṭayn* (vol. 1, chapter 29), Ibrāhīm ibn Muḥammad Ḥamwīnī narrates via his chain from Sa'īd ibn Jubayr and he from Ibn 'Abbās:

قَالَ رَسُولُ اللهِ صلى الله عليه و آله وسلم لِامِّ سَلَمَةَ: هذا عَلِيٌّ امِيرُ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ وَسَيِّدُ الْمُسْلِمِينَ وَوَصِيِّي وَعَيْبَةُ عِلْمِي وَبابِيَ الَّذِي اوتى مِنْهُ، اخِي فِي الدُّنْيا وَالْآخِرَةِ، وَمَعِي فِي السَّنامِ الْاعْلى، يَقْتُلُ الْقاسِطِينَ وَالنَّاكِثِينَ وَالْمارِقِينَ.

God's Messenger said:

> This is Ali, the Master of the Faithful and the chief of the Muslims; he is my executor, the repository of my knowledge, my door through which I am reached, my brother in this world and the Hereafter, and with me in the Seventh Heaven. He will kill the [covenant] breakers and deviators and through-and-through.

Sibṭ ibn Jawzī refers in *Tadhkirah al-Khawāṣ* (p. 49) to the letter 'Amr ibn al-'Āṣ wrote to Mu'āwiyah in which he mentions in detail 'Alī ibn Abī Ṭālib's virtues. It must be known that 'Amr ibn al-'Āṣ was not initially opposed to the Master of the Faithful, as is clear from his letter, because he says things against Mu'āwiyah. However, later on, when Muā'wiyah wrote him another letter inviting him to help him, attaching the pact of governorship of Egypt, he sided with Muā'wiyah. No matter how much his son and his servant discouraged him from doing so, it was to no avail; he set off for the Levant, joined Mu'āwiyah, and equipped himself to fight against the Master of the Faithful.

Sibṭ ibn al-Jawzī says on page 49:

> The historians say:
>
> > When 'Uthmān came to power, he did not pay 'Amr ibn al-'Āṣ any attention or appoint him as governor of anywhere. He dismissed him as governor of Egypt. When 'Uthmān laid siege, 'Amr ibn al-'Āṣ went to the Levant and settled in Palestine. He incited against 'Uthmān until ['Uthmān] was killed.

'Alī's Virtues in 'Amr ibn al-'Āṣ' Words

They said to Mu'āwiyah: "Amr ibn al-'Āṣ is the cleverest of the Arabs, and if you want to rule and defeat Ali ibn Abī Ṭālib in battle, you need 'Amr ibn al-'Ās." Therefore, Mu'āwiyah wrote a letter to Amr ibn al-'Āṣ inviting him to help him and fight against the Master of the Faithful; in reply to his letter, 'Amr ibn al-'Āṣ wrote:

امّا بَعدُ فَاِنّی قَرَأتُ کِتابَکَ وَ فَهِمتُهُ فَاَمّا مادَعَوتَنی اِلَیهِ مِن خَلعِ رِبقَةِ الاِسلامِ مِن عُنُقی وَ التَّهوُّنِ مَعَکَ فِی الضَّلالَةِ وَاعانَتی اِیّاکَ عَلَی الباطِلِ وَاختِراطِ السَّیفِ فی وَجهِ امیرِ المُؤمِنینَ عَلِیِّ بنِ اَبی طالِبٍ فَهُوَ اَخو رَسُولِ اللهِ صلی الله علیه و آله وسلم وَوَلِیُّهُ وَوَصِیُّهُ وَوارِثُهُ وَقاضی دَینِهِ وَمُنجِزُ وَعدِهِ وَصِهرُهُ عَلَی ابنَتِهِ سَیِّدَةِ نِساءِ العالَمینَ وَاَبُو السِّبطَینِ الحَسَنِ وَالحُسَینِ سَیِّدَی شَبابِ اَهلِ الجَنَّةِ.

وَاَمّا قَولُکَ اَنَّکَ خَلیفَةُ عُثمانَ قَد عُزِلَ بِمَوتِهِ وَزالَت خِلافَتُکَ وَاَمّا قَولُکَ اَنَّ امیرَ المُؤمِنینَ اَشلَی الصَّحابَةَ عَلی قَتلِ عُثمانَ فَهُوَ کَذِبٌ وَزُورٌ وَغَوایَةٌ. وَیحَکَ یا مُعاوِیَةُ اَما عَلِمتَ اَنَّ اَبَا الحَسَنِ بَذَلَ نَفسَهُ لِلّهِ تَعالی

وَبِاتَ عَلَى فِرَاشِ رَسُولِ اللهِ صلى الله عليه و آله وسلم، وَقَالَ فِيهِ: مَنْ كُنْتُ مَوْلاهُ فَعَلِيٌّ مَوْلاهُ؟ فَكِتَابُكَ لا يَخْدَعُ ذَا عَقْلٍ وَلا ذَا دِينٍ، وَالسَّلامُ.

And now, I have read and understood your letter. However, what you have called me for: to remove the responsibility of Islam from my shoulders, be your partner in aggression, help you in your wrongdoing, and draw my sword against the Master of the Faithful, Ali ibn Abī Ṭālib—he is God's Messenger's brother (s), successor (*waliyyuhu*), executor, heir, the repayer of his debt, fulfiller of his covenant, in-law via his daughter, the chief of the women of all worlds, and the father of the two grandsons, Hasan and Husayn, the chiefs of the youths out of the people of Heaven.

As for your saying that you are 'Uthmān's successor, you were discharged upon his death and your successorship came to an end.

And as for your saying that the Master of the Faithful incited the Companions of the Prophet to kill 'Uthmān, it is a lie, fabrication, and error.

Mu'āwiyah, woe on you! Do you not know that Abū al-Hasan sacrificed himself for the Transcendent God? He lay in God's Messenger's bed all night. He said about him: "Whoever's Master I am, this Ali is his Master." Now, this letter of yours cannot deceive anyone with sense or religion. Peace!

When he read his letter, 'Utbah ibn Abī Sufyān told him: "Do not despair of him. Awaken a desire in him for the governorship and make him your partner in authority." That is why when he sent him a second letter, attaching his covenant to him to govern Egypt, and 'Amr saw that he would be the governor of Egypt, Amr's heart inclined towards Mu'āwiyah, and he set out for the Levant to fight Ali ibn Abī Ṭālib.[180]

Our reason for citing 'Amr ibn al-'Āṣ' letter here is what it says acknowledging the Master of the Faithful's merit and considering him to be God's Messenger's executor, heir, repayer of his debt, fulfiller of his covenant, and guardian to every believer.

Ibn Shahr Āshūb also narrates in *al-Manāqib* (vol. 1, p. 542), from Sufyān al-Thawrī, from Manṣūr, from Mujāhid, and he from Salmān Farsi, who said:

سَمِعْتُ رَسُولَ اللهِ صلى الله عليه و آله وسلم يقول: انَّ وَصِيِّي وَخَلِيفَتِي وَخَيْرَ مَنْ اتْرُكُ بَعْدِي يُنْجِزُ مَوْعِدِي وَيَقْضِي دَيْنِي عَلِيُّ بْنُ ابِي طَالِبٍ

"I heard the Prophet say: 'Surely, my executor and successor and the best whom I will leave behind will fulfill my covenant and repay my debt—Ali ibn Abī Ṭālib.'"

Muḥib al-Dīn Ṭabarī, in *al-Riyāḍ al-Naḍrah* (vol. 2, p. 178) and *Dhakhā'ir al-'Uqbā* (p. 171), via his chain of transmission from Anas, and

Qundūzī Ḥanafī in *Yanabī' al-Mawaddah* (p. 208), from Ahmad ibn Ḥanbal's *Manāqib*, relate from Anas, who said:

قالَ رَسُولُ اللهِ صلى الله عليه و آله وسلم: وَصِيّي وَوارِثي يَقْضي دَيْني وَيُنْجِزُ مَوْعِدي عَلِيُّ بْنُ ابي طالِب.

God's Messenger stated: "My executor and heir will repay my debt and fulfil my covenant—Ali ibn Abī Ṭālib."

Qundūzī Ḥanafī, in a *hadith* from Sa'īd ibn Jubayr, relates in *Yanābī' al-Mawaddah* from Ibn 'Abbās that God's Messenger said:

يا عَلِيُّ انْتَ صاحِبُ حَوْضي وَصاحِبُ لِوائي وَحَبيبُ قَلْبي وَوَصِيّي ووارِثُ عِلْمي.

"O Ali, you are in charge of my Pool, my standard-bearer, my heart's beloved, my executor and heir to my knowledge."

The others are *hadiths* in which the Prophet calls Ali "the seal of the executors (*khātim al-awṣiyā'* or *khātim al-waṣiyyīn*)," "chief of the executors (*sayyid al-awṣiyā'* or *sayyid al-waṣiyyīn*)" and "the best of the executors (*afḍal al-awṣiyā'*)."

Similarly a *hadith* cited above from *Ghāyat al-Marām* (p. 619), on the authority of Ḥamwīnī via his chain of narration from Jābir ibn 'Abdullāh al-Anṣārī, says that one day he was with the Prophet in one of the gardens of Medina:

We passed by a date palm and the date palm cried out:

هذا مُحَمَّد سَيِّدُ الأَنْبِياءِ، وَهذا عَلِيٌّ سَيِّدُ الأَوْصِياءِ وَابُو الأَئِمَّةِ الطّاهِرينَ.

"This is Mohammad, the chief of the Messengers, and this is Ali, the chief of the executors, and the father of the Immaculate Imams."

We also related many *hadiths* known by Anas' *Hadith*, for example, that the Prophet said to him:

اوَّلُ مَنْ يَدْخُلُ عَلَيْكَ مِنْ هذَا الْبابِ امِيرُ الْمُؤْمِنينَ وَسَيِّدُ الْمُسْلِمينَ وَقائِدُ الْغُرِّ الْمُحَجَّلينَ وَخاتَمُ الْوَصِيّين.

"The first to come in through this door to you, is the Master of the Faithful, the chief of the Muslims, the Leader of the bright-faced, white-footed, and the seal of the executors."

We also related *hadith* 23 from *Ghāyat al-Marām* (p. 621), which the Sunnis narrate from Ibn Shādhān from Imam Riḍā from his forefathers that God's Messenger was asked:

وَمَا الْعُرْوَةُ الْوُثْقٰى؟ قَالَ: وِلَايَةُ سَيِّدِ الْوَصِيِّيْنَ. قِيلَ: يَا رَسُولَ اللهِ وَمَنْ سَيِّدُ الْوَصِيِّيْنَ؟ قَالَ: اَمِيرُ الْمُؤْمِنِيْنَ... اَخِي عَلِيُّ بْنُ اَبِي طَالِبٍ.

"What is the indissoluble bond?" He replied: "The guardianship of the chief of the executors." He was asked: "God's Messenger, who is the chief of the executors?" He replied: "The Master of the Faithful...my brother, Ali ibn Abī Ṭālib."

Also, while discussing the *Hadith* of Adjuration, in which Ali delivered a sermon to the Muslims in the Prophet's mosque during 'Uthmān's reign, we said that the author of *'Alī wa al-Waṣiyyah* narrates from Ḥamwīnī's *Farā'id al-Simṭayn* via his chain of narration from Sulaym ibn Qays al-Hilālī from the Master of the Faithful that the Prophet said:

اَنَا اَفْضَلُ اَنْبِيَاءِ اللهِ وَرُسُلِهِ، وَعَلِيُّ بْنُ اَبِي طَالِبٍ وَصِيِّي اَفْضَلُ الْاَوْصِيَاءِ.

I am the most virtuous of God's Prophets and Messengers, and Ali ibn Abī Ṭālib, my executor, is the most virtuous of the executors.

Munāwī 'Abd al-Ra'ūf ibn Tāj al-'Ārifīn narrates in *Kunūz al-Ḥaqā'iq fī Ḥadīth Khayr al-Khalā'iq*, and a footnote in al-Suyūṭī's *al-Jāmi' al-Saghīr* (vol. 1, p. 71) cites a *hadith* under the letter *alif* in Daylamī's *Ferdaus al-Akhbār*, via his chain of narration from Abū Dharr al-Ghifārī:

قَالَ: قَالَ رَسُولُ اللهِ صلى الله عليه و آله وسلم وَهُوَ يُخَاطِبُ اَمِيرَ الْمُؤْمِنِيْنَ عَلِيَّ بْنَ اَبِي طَالِبٍ عليه السلام: اَنَا خَاتَمُ الْاَنْبِيَاءِ وَاَنْتَ يَا عَلِيُّ خَاتَمُ الْاَوْصِيَاءِ.

"(Abū Dharr) says: 'God's Messenger said, addressing the Master of the Faithful Ali ibn Abī Ṭālib (as): "I am the Seal of the Prophets, and you, Ali, are the seal of the executors."'"

Shaykh Sulaymān Qundūzī Ḥanafī narrates this *hadith* slightly differently in *Yanābī' al-Mawaddah* (p. 79) on the authority of Ḥamwīnī's *Farā'id al-Simṭayn*:

قَالَ اَبُو ذَرٍّ: قَالَ رَسُولُ اللهِ صلى الله عليه و آله وسلم: اَنَا خَاتَمُ النَّبِيِّيْنَ، وَاَنْتَ يَا عَلِيُّ خَاتَمُ الْوَصِيِّيْنَ اِلَى يَوْمِ الدِّيْنِ.

Abū Dharr said: "God's Messenger (s) said: 'I am the Seal of the Prophets, and you, Ali, are the seal of the executors until the Day of Resurrection.'"

Qundūzī also cites in *Yanābī' al-Mawaddah* (p. 80) from *al-Manāqib*, on the authority of Imam Ja'far ibn Muhammad Sādiq from his forefathers:

قالَ: كانَ عَلِيٌّ عليه السلام يَرى مَعَ رَسُولِ اللهِ صلى الله عليه و آله و سلم قَبْلَ الرِّسالَةِ الضَّوْءَ وَيَسْمَعُ الصَّوْتَ، وَقالَ لَهُ رَسُولُ اللهِ: لَوْلا أَنِّي خاتَمُ الأَنْبِياءِ لَكُنْتَ شَرِيكاً فِي النُّبُوَّةِ، فَإِنْ لَمْ تَكُنْ نَبِيّاً فَأَنْتَ وَصِيُّ نَبِيٍّ وَوارِثُهُ، بَلْ أَنْتَ سَيِّدُ الأَوْصِياءِ وَإِمامُ الأَتْقِياءِ.

He said:

> Before the Message, Ali (as) along with God's Messenger (s) would see the light, and hear the voice. God's Messenger told him:
>
> > If I were not the Seal of the Prophets, you would be my partner in prophecy, so, even if you are not a Prophet, you are a Prophet's executor and heir. In fact, you are the chief of the executors, and the Leader of the Pious.

At the end of part two of *Farā'id al-Simṭayn*, in the discussion on the life of Imam Mahdī, the implementer from Mohammad's family, Ḥamwīnī says:

عَنْ أَبِي مُعاوِيَةَ عَنِ الأَعْمَشِ عَنْ عَبايَةَ ابْنِ رِبْعِيٍّ عَنْ عَبْدِ اللهِ بْنِ عَبّاسٍ قالَ: قالَ رَسُولُ اللهِ صلى الله عليه و آله و سلم: أَنا سَيِّدُ النَّبِيِّينَ وَعَلِيُّ بْنُ أَبِي طالِبٍ سَيِّدُ الْوَصِيِّينَ، وَإِنَّ أَوْصِيائِي بَعْدِي اثْنا عَشَرَ أَوَّلُهُمْ عَلِيُّ بْنُ أَبِي طالِبٍ وَآخِرُهُمُ الْقائِمُ الْمَهْدِيُّ عليهم السلام.

> On the authority of Abū Mu'āwiyah on the authority of al-A'mash on the authority of 'Abāyah ibn Rab'ī on the authority of 'Abdullāh ibn 'Abbās: God's Messenger (s) said: I am the chief of the Messengers, and Ali ibn Abī Ṭālib is the chief of the executors; my executors after I die are twelve; the first of them is Ali ibn Abī Ṭālib and the last of them is the implementer (*qā'im*), the Mahdī (as).

Qundūzī Ḥanafī relates this prophetic *hadith* on page 445 of *Yanābī' al-Mawaddah*, from 'Abāyah ibn Rab'ī, and he from Jābir, from the Prophet, and, on pages 447 and 487, from Ḥamwīnī's *Farā'id al-Simṭayn*, via the author's chain from 'Abāyah ibn Rab'ī, from Ibn 'Abbās from the Prophet.

Others are *hadith* pertaining to the Prophet's words to his daughter, the greatest righteous woman (*al-ṣiddīqah al-kubrā*), at the end of his life.

He has clearly stated that the Master of the Faithful, Ali ibn Abī Ṭālib, was his executor—the best of the successors. These *hadiths* are also extremely important and worthy of scrutiny with regard to the scholars who recorded them in their reliable books:

Ganjī Shāfi'ī says in chapter one of *al-Bayān fī Akhbār Ṣāḥib al-Zamān* (p. 55), (Najaf):

> Sayyid Naqīb Kāmil Mostaẓhir al-Dawlah, the ambassador to the aggrandized caliphate, 'Alam al-Hudā (the Banner of Guidance), the crown of the commanders of the Messenger's (s) Family, Abū al Futūḥ al-Murtaḍā, son of Ahmad, son of Mohammad, son of Ja'far, son of Mohammad, son of Ahmad, son of Mohammad, son of Isḥāq, son of Imam Ja'far al-Ṣādiq, son of Imam Mohammad Bāqir, son of Imam Zayn al-Ābidīn, son of Imam Husayn the Martyr, son of the Master of the Faithful, Ali son of Abī Ṭālib (as) informed us on the authority of Abū al-Faraj Yahyā ibn Maḥmūd Thaqafī, from Abū Ali al-Hasan ibn Ahmad al-Haddad, from Ḥāfiz Abū Nu'aym Ahmad ibn 'Abdillah Iṣfahānī, from Ḥāfiz Abū al-Qāsim Sulaymān ibn Ahmad Ṭabarānī, and (via another chain) Ḥāfiz Abū al-Ḥajjāj Yūsuf ibn Khalīl in Aleppo, from 'Abdullāh Muhammad ibn Abī Zayd al-Kurānī in Isfahan, from Fāṭimah, the daughter of 'Abdullāh Jūzdāniyyah, from Abū Bakr ibn Buraydah, from Ḥāfiz Abū al-Qāsim Ṭabarānī (to whom both chains of transmission lead), from Muhammad ibn Zurayq ibn Jāmi' al-Miṣri, from Haytham ibn Ḥabīb, from Sufyān ibn 'Uyaynah, from Ali al-Hilālī, who relates from his father:

قالَ: دَخَلْتُ على رَسُولِ اللهِ صلى الله عليه و آله وسلم فى شكاتِهِ الَّتى قُبِضَ فيها فاذا فاطِمَةُ عليها السلام عِنْدَ رَأْسِهِ. قالَ: فَبَكَتْ حَتّى ارْتَفَعَ صَوْتُها فَرَفَعَ رَسُولُ اللهِ طَرْفَهُ اليها قالَ: حَبيبَتى فاطِمَةُ، ما الَّذى يُبْكيكِ؟ قالَتْ: اخْشَى الضَّيْعَةَ مِنْ بَعْدِكَ. فَقالَ: يا حَبيبَتى، اما عَلِمْتِ انَّ اللهَ اطَّلَعَ الَى الْارْضِ اطِّلاعَةً فَاخْتارَ مِنْها اباكِ فَبَعَثَهُ بِرِسالَتِهِ، ثُمَّ اطَّلَعَ اطِّلاعَةً فَاخْتارَ مِنْها بَعْلَكِ وَاوْحى الَىَّ ان انْكِحْكِ ايّاهُ؟ يا فاطِمَةُ وَنَحْنُ اهْلُ بَيْتٍ قَدْ اعْطانَا اللهُ سَبْعَ خِصالٍ لَمْ يُعْطِ احَداً قَبْلَنا وَلا يُعْطى احَداً بَعْدَنا، انَا خاتَمُ النَّبِيّينَ وَاكْرَمُ النَّبِيّينَ عَلَى اللهِ وَاحَبُّ الْمَخْلُوقينَ الَى اللهِ وَانَا ابُوكِ، وَوَصِيّى خَيْرُ الْاوْصياءِ وَاحَبُّهُمْ الَى اللهِ وَهُوَ بَعْلُكِ، وَمِنّا مَنْ لَهُ جَناحانِ اخْضَرانِ يَطيرُ [بِهِما] فِى الْجَنَّةِ مَعَ الْمَلائِكَةِ حَيْثُ شاءَ وَهُوَ ابْنُ عَمِّ ابيكِ وَاخو بَعْلِكِ، وَمِنّا سِبْطا هذِهِ الْامَّةِ وَهُما ابْناكِ الْحَسَنُ وَالْحُسَيْنُ وَهُما سَيِّدا شَبابِ اهْلِ الْجَنَّةِ، وَابُوهُما وَالَّذى بَعَثَنى بِالْحَقِّ خَيْرٌ مِنْهُما. يا فاطِمَةُ وَالَّذى بَعَثَنى بِالْحَقِّ انَّ مِنْهُما مَهْدِىُّ هذِهِ الْامَّةِ، اذا صارَتِ الدُّنْيا هَرْجاً وَمَرْجاً، وَتَظاهَرَتِ الْفِتَنُ، وَتَقَطَّعَتِ السُّبُلُ، وَاغارَ بَعْضُهُمْ عَلى بَعْضٍ، فَلا كَبيرٌ يَرْحَمُ صَغيراً، وَلا صَغيرٌ يُوَقِّرُ كَبيراً، يَبْعَثُ اللهُ عِنْدَ ذلِكَ مِنْهُما مَنْ يَفْتَحُ حُصُونَ الضَّلالَةِ وَقُلُوباً اغْلَفاً، يَقُومُ بِالدّينِ فى آخِرِ الزَّمانِ كَما قُمْتُ بِهِ فى اوَّلِ الزَّمانِ، وَيَمْلَأُ

الدُّنيا عَدلاً كَما مُلِئَت جَوراً. يا فاطِمَةُ لا تَحزَني وَلا تَبكي فَإنَّ اللهَ ارحَمُ بِكِ وَارأَفُ عَلَيكِ مِنّي وَذلِكَ لِكَانِكِ مِنّي وَمَوقِعِكِ مِن قَلبي، وَزَوَّجَكِ اللهُ زَوجَكِ وَهُوَ اشرَفُ اهلِ بَيتِكِ حَسَباً وَاكرَمُهُم مَنصَباً، وَ ارحَمُهُم بِالرَّعيَةِ وَاعدَلُهُم بِالسَّوِيَّةِ وَابصَرُهُم بِالقَضِيَّةِ، وَقَد سَأَلتُ رَبّي انْ تَكونى اوَّلَ مَن يَلحَقُني مِن اهلِ بَيتي. قالَ عَلِيٌّ عليه السلام فَلَمّا قُبِضَ النَّبِيُّ صلى الله عليه و آله وسلم لَم تَبقَ فاطِمَةُ بَعدَهُ الّا خَمسَةً وَسَبعينَ يَوماً حَتّى الحَقَهَا اللهُ بِهِ صلى الله عليه و آله وسلم.

He says:

> I went to see God's Messenger (s) during the illness from which he was taken and lo, Fāṭimah (as), was by his head. She then wept until her voice grew loud, so God's Messenger looked up at her and said: My beloved, Fāṭimah, what is making you cry? Fāṭimah said: I fear being lost after you die. He replied:
>
> > My beloved, do you not know that God looked at the earth, chose your father, and sent him with His Message, then looked and chose your husband from [the earth] and revealed to me to marry you to him?
> >
> > O Fāṭimah, we are a household whom God has given seven characteristics that He has not given anyone before us and will not give anyone after us—I am the Seal of the Prophets and the dearest of all the Prophets to God, most beloved of the creatures to God, and I am your father. My executor is the best of the executors and the most beloved of them to God—he is your husband. Among us is he who has two green wings [on which] he will fly with the angels in Heaven wherever he desires—he is your father's paternal cousin and your husband's brother. Of us are the two grandsons of this nation, namely your two sons, Hasan and Husayn, who are two chiefs of the youths of the people of Heaven. By God, Who has sent me with the truth, their father is better than they are.
> >
> > Fāṭimah, by Him Who sent me with the truth, the Mahdī of this nation will be of them when the whole world turns into chaos, the seditions make common cause, paths are cut off, some people raid others, neither the great having mercy on the small nor the small respecting the great. It is then that God will send from them one who will capture the fortresses of error and hearts surrounded [with perversion].
> >
> > He will rise up with the religion at the end of the era as I have risen up with it at the beginning of the era. He will fill the world with justice, as it has been filled with injustice.

> Fāṭimah! Do not be sorrowful or cry, because God is more merciful and more compassionate to you than I am. That is because of your relationship to me and your place in my heart.
>
> God married you to your husband, the noblest in your household in terms of lineage, highest in rank, most merciful to the flock, fairest of them with equal measure, and wisest in judgment. I have asked God for you to be the first of my Household to join me.[181]

Ali said: Fāṭimah lived no more than seventy-five days after the Prophet was taken—until God had her rejoin him (s).[182]

Then, Ganjī says: "The author of *Ḥilyah al-Awliyā'* cites this *hadith* the same way with reference to the Mahdī's characteristics; it is also related in *al-Mu'jam al-Kabīr* by Ṭabarānī the teacher of the skilled."

Indeed, Ibn Ḥajar Haythamī also relates this *hadith* in *Majma' al-Zawā'id* (vol. 9, p. 165). We should know that according to specialist jargon used by [*hadith*] specialists and assessors of the reliability or unreliability of narrators, this prophetic *hadith* is authentic, because Ṭabarānī cites it in *al-Mu'jam al-Kabīr* and it is obvious to everyone. Ṭabarānī himself says that he has only collected the most authentic *hadiths* in *al-Mu'jam al-Kabīr*, so this *hadith* alone proves the executorship of the Master of the Faithful. Supposing that there were no other *hadiths* about the executorship of the Master of the Faithful, this one alone would suffice. In this *hadith*, the Prophet specifies that Ali ibn Abī Ṭālib is his executor and is the best of the executors, that is, better than all previous Messengers' successors—from Adam to Jesus. It is obvious that this executorship is not with regard to private and personal affairs but does pertain to prophecy, the caliphate, and the governing of the Muslims in all respects. Therefore, the prophetic *hadith*, with regard to its explicit appointment of him as executor and its strong chain of transmission, is deemed to be proof of Ali ibn Abī Ṭālib's executorship.

Furthermore Khārazmī in his *Manāqib* (p. 67) relates from Ibn Rab'ī, and he from Abū Ayyūb al-Anṣāri that:

انَّ النَّبِيَّ مَرِضَ مَرَضَهُ فَأَتَتْهُ فَاطِمَةُ الزَّهْرَاءُ عليها السلام تَعُودُهُ، فَلَمَّا رَأَتْ مَا بِرَسُولِ اللهِ صلى الله عليه و آله وسلم مِنَ الْجَهْدِ وَالضَّعْفِ اسْتَعْبَرَتْ فَبَكَتْ حَتَّى سَالَ دَمْعُهَا عَلَى خَدِّيْهَا، فَقَالَ لَهَا رَسُولُ اللهِ صلى الله عليه و آله وسلم: يَا فَاطِمَةُ انَّ لِكَرَامَةِ اللهِ عَزَّوَجَلَّ اِيَّاكِ زَوَّجَكِ مَنْ هُوَ اقْدَمُهُمْ سِلْماً، وَاكْثَرُهُمْ عِلْماً، وَاعْظَمُهُمْ

حِلْماً، انَّ اللهَ اطَّلَعَ الى اهْلِ الْارْضِ اطِّلاعَةً فَاخْتارَنى مِنْهُمْ فَبَعَثَنى نَبِيّاً مُرْسَلاً، ثُمَّ اطَّلَعَ اطِّلاعَةً فَاخْتارَ مِنْهُمْ بَعْلَكِ، فَاَوْحى الَىَّ انْ زَوَّجْتُكِ اِيّاهُ وَاتَّخِذَهُ وَصِيّاً وَاخاً.

When the Prophet felt seriously ill, Fāṭimah al-Zahrā' (as) went to visit him to nurse him. When she noticed the strain and weakness in God's Messenger, she teared up and cried until the tears ran down her cheeks. God's Messenger said to her:

> Fāṭimah! Because of God's respect for you He has married you to the first of them to become a Muslim, most knowledgeable of them and most tolerant of them. God looked at the earth, chose me from them, and sent me as an envoy Prophet. He then looked, chose your husband from them, and revealed to me to marry you to him and to appoint him as executor and brother.

This *hadith* is narrated slightly differently in *Yanābī' al-Mawaddah* (p. 81), from Khārazmī. [The author] then says:

وَزادَ ابْنُ الْمَغازِلى: يافاطِمَةُ انّا اهْلَ الْبَيْتِ اعْطينا سَبْعَ خِصالٍ لَمْ يُعْطَها اَحَدٌ مِنَ الْاَوَّلينَ وَلا يُدْرِكُها اَحَدٌ مِنَ الْآخِرينَ. مِنّا اَفْضَلُ الْاَنْبِياءِ وَهُوَ اَبُوكِ، وَوَصِيُّنا خَيْرُ الْاَوْصياءِ وَهُوَ بَعْلُكِ، وَشَهيدُنا خَيْرُ الشُّهَداءِ وَهُوَ حَمْزَةُ عَمُّكِ، وَمِنّا مَنْ لَهُ جَناحانِ يَطيرُ بِهِما فِى الْجَنَّةِ حَيْثُ يَشاءُ وَهُوَ جَعْفَرُ ابْنُ عَمِّكِ، وَمِنّا سِبْطانِ وَسَيِّدا شَبابِ اَهْلِ الْجَنَّةِ اِبْناكِ. وَالَّذى نَفْسى بِيَدِهِ اِنَّ مَهْدِىَّ هذِهِ الْاُمَّةِ يُصَلّى عيسَى ابْنُ مَرْيَمَ خَلْفَهُ وَهُوَ مِنْ وُلْدِكِ.

Ibn al-Maghāzilī adds:

> Fāṭimah, we surely are a household who have been given seven characteristics not given to any of the first people and which will not be seen by any of the last.
>
> The most virtuous Prophet is one of us, and he is your father. Our executor is the best of executors and he is your husband. Our martyr is the best of martyrs and he is Ḥamzah—your uncle. He who has two wings on which he flies wherever he wants in Heaven is one of us, and he is Ja'far, your paternal cousin. Two grandsons, the two chiefs of Heaven's people's youths in Paradise are of us—your sons.

Then, he added: "By Him in Whose Hand is my soul, the Mahdī of this nation, behind whom Jesus will pray, is of your offspring." He then said:

وزاد الحموينيُّ: يَمْلَأُ الأرضَ عَدْلاً وَقِسْطاً بَعْدَ ما مُلِئَتْ جَوْراً وَظُلْماً. يا فاطِمَةُ لا تَحْزَنِي وَلا تَبْكِي فَإنَّ اللهَ عَزَّ وَجَلَّ ارْحَمُ بِكِ وَأرأفُ عَلَيْكِ مِنِّي وذلِكَ لِكَانِكِ وَمَوْقِعِكِ مِنْ قَلْبِي. قَدْ زَوَّجَكِ اللهُ زَوْجاً وَهُوَ اعْظَمُهُمْ حَسَباً، وَأكْرَمُهُمْ نَسَباً، وَارْحَمُهُمْ بِالرَّعِيَّةِ، وَاعْدَلُهُمْ بِالسَّوِيَّةِ، وَابْصَرُهُمْ بِالْقَضِيَّةِ.

Ḥamwīnī adds:

> He will fill the earth with justice and equity after it has been filled with unfairness and wrongdoing. Fāṭimah! Be not sorrowful or cry because God is more merciful and more compassionate to you than I am. That is because of your status and your place in my heart. God married you to a husband who is the greatest of them in terms of relationship by marriage and the noblest of them in terms of blood lineage, the kindest of them to all the flock, the fairest of them in equality and the wisest of them in judgment.

Obviously, when put together, all these paragraphs from Khārazmī's, Ibn al-Maghāzilī's, and Ḥamwīnī's above *ḥadīths* are just worded slightly differently but mean the same as Ganjī Shāfi'ī's, narrated by his two chains of transmission from Ali al-Hilālī on the authority of his father Ali and cited by al-Ṭabarānī in *al-Mu'jam al-Kabīr*.

It is also no secret that Ibn al-Maghāzilī narrates another similar *ḥadīth*. *Yanābī' al-Mawaddah* (p. 436), says:

وذكر ما في «المناقب» لابن المغازلي عن أبي ايوب الانصاري ـ رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُ ـ قالَ: انَّ النَّبيَّ صلى الله عليه و آله وسلم مَرِضَ فَأتَتْهُ فاطِمَةُ ـ رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْها ـ وَبَكَتْ فَقالَ: يا فاطِمَةُ انَّ لِكَرامَةِ اللهِ اياكِ زَوَّجَكِ مَنْ هُوَ اقْدَمُهُمْ سِلْماً وَاكْثَرُهُمْ عِلْماً. انَّ اللهَ تَعالى اطَّلَعَ الى اهْلِ الأرْضِ اطِّلاعَةً فَاخْتارَني مِنْهُمْ فَجَعَلَني نَبِيّاً مُرْسَلاً، ثُمَّ اطَّلَعَ اطِّلاعَةً ثانِيَةً فَاخْتارَ مِنْهُمْ بَعْلَكِ فَاوْحى الَيَّ انْ زَوِّجَهُ اياكِ وَاتَّخِذَهُ وَصِيّاً. يا فاطِمَةُ مِنّا خَيْرُ الأنْبِياءِ وَهُوَ ابُوكِ، وَمِنّا خَيْرُ الأوْصِياءِ وَهُوَ بَعْلُكِ، وَمِنّا خَيْرُ الشُّهَداءِ وَهُوَ حَمْزَةُ عَمُّ ابيكِ، وَمِنّا مَنْ لَهُ جَناحانِ يَطيرُ بِهِما في الْجَنَّةِ حَيْثُ شاءَ وَهُوَ جَعْفَرُ ابْنُ عَمِّ ابيكِ، وَمِنّا سِبْطا هذِهِ الأمَّةِ وَسَيِّدا شَبابِ اهْلِ الْجَنَّةِ الْحَسَنُ وَالْحُسَيْنُ وَهُما ابْناكِ. وَالَّذي نَفْسي بِيَدِهِ مِنّا مَهْدِيُّ هذِهِ الأمَّةِ وَهُوَ مِنْ وُلْدِكِ.

We shall cite what Ibn al-Maghāzilī's *al-Manāqib* says on the authority of Abū Ayyūb al-Anṣārī (may God be pleased with him): The Prophet (s) became ill and so Fāṭimah (may God be pleased with her) visited him and wept so he said:

> Fāṭimah! Because of God's respect for you, he has married you to the first of them to become a Muslim, the most knowledgeable of them. Surely the Transcendent God looked at the people of the earth, chose

me from them, and made me an envoy Prophet. He then looked a second time, chose your husband from them, and revealed to me to marry him to you and appoint him as executor. Fāṭimah! The best of Prophets is one of us, and he is your father. The best of executors is one of us and he is your husband. The best of martyrs is one of us and he is Ḥamzah, your father's uncle. He who has two wings on which he flies wherever he likes in Heaven is one of us and he is Ja'far, your paternal cousin. The two grandsons of this nation and the chiefs of Heaven's people's youths are of us and they are your sons. By Him in Whose Hand is my soul, this nation's Mahdī is one of us and he is from your offspring.

After relating this *hadith* from Ibn al-Maghāzilī, Qundūzī says: "Ḥamwīnī cites this *hadith* this way in *Farā'id al-Simṭayn*."

Also in *Yanābī' al-Mawaddah* (p. 434), Qundūzī Ḥanafī relates from 'Abāyah ibn Rab'ī, and he from Abū Ayyūb al-Anṣārī that:

قَالَ: قَالَ رَسُولُ اللهِ لِفَاطِمَةَ رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهَا: مِنَّا خَيْرُ الْأَنْبِيَاءِ وَهُوَ أَبُوكِ، وَمِنَّا خَيْرُ الْأَوْصِيَاءِ وَهُوَ بَعْلُكِ وَمِنَّا خَيْرُ الشُّهَدَاءِ وَهُوَ عَمُّ أَبِيكِ حَمْزَةُ، وَمِنَّا مَنْ لَهُ جَنَاحَانِ يَطِيرُ بِهِمَا فِي الْجَنَّةِ حَيْثُ يَشَاءُ وَهُوَ ابْنُ عَمِّ أَبِيكِ جَعْفَرُ، وَمِنَّا سِبْطَا هٰذِهِ الْأُمَّةِ وَسَيِّدَا شَبَابِ أَهْلِ الْجَنَّةِ الْحَسَنُ وَالْحُسَيْنُ وَهُمَا ابْنَاكِ، وَمِنَّا الْمَهْدِيُّ وَهُوَ مِنْ وُلْدِكِ..

God's Messenger said to Fāṭimah (may God be pleased with her):

> The best of Prophets is one of us and he is your father. The best of executors is one of us and he is your husband. The best of martyrs is one of us and he is your father's uncle Ḥamzah. He who has two wings on which he flies wherever he likes in Heaven is one of us and he is your paternal cousin Ja'far. The two grandsons of this nation and the chiefs of Heaven's people's youths, Ḥasan and Ḥusayn, are of us and they are your two sons. The Mahdī is one of us and he is from your offspring.

He then says: "Ṭabarānī cites this *hadith* in *al-Awsaṭ*." Ibn Ṣabbāgh Mālikī, in *al-Fuṣūl al-Muhimmah* (Najaf, p. 278) relates a detailed *hadith*, most of the words of which match Ganjī Shāfi'ī's. It also says that the Prophet told Fāṭimah:

وَوَصِيُّنَا خَيْرُ الْأَوْصِيَاءِ وَهُوَ بَعْلُكِ.

"And our executor is the best of executors and he is your husband."

Mawlā Ali Muttaqī Ḥanafī says in *Kanz al-'Ummāl* (vol. 6, p. 153, *hadith* number 2541):

اخرج الطبرانی فی «المعجم الکبیر»:

انّ رسول الله صلی الله علیه و آله وسلم قال لابنتِه فاطمة: اما علمتِ انّ الله عزّ وجلّ اطّلع علی اهل الارض فاختار منهم اباكِ فبعثه نبیاً، ثم اطّلع الثانیة فاختار بعلكِ فاوحی الیّ فانكحته ایاكِ واتخذته وصیاً؟

Al-Ṭabarani cites in *al-Mu'jam al-Kabir*:

> God's Messenger (s) said to his daughter, Fāṭimah:
>
> > Do you not know that God, Mighty and Sublime is He, looked at the people on the earth, chose your father from them, and sent him as a Prophet? He then looked a second time, chose your husband, and revealed to me to marry him to you and appoint him as executor.

This is almost identical to the *hadith* related by Ganjī Shāfi'ī in *Kifāyah al-Ṭālib* (p. 161), under the heading *"Takhṣīṣ Ali bi-kawnihi min al-Mukhtārayn 'ind Rabb al-'Ālamīn"* from al-A'mash from his ancestor 'Abayah ibn Rab'ī from Abū Ayyūb al-Anṣārī. The only difference between them is the inclusion of the word *li-ibnatihi*, i.e. *li-ibnatihi Fāṭimah* (to his daughter Fāṭimah) in this one. Ganjī Shāfi'ī just says *"l Fāṭimah* (to Fāṭimah)."

Although there are some differences in the wording of thi prophetic *hadith* as narrated by the most senior Sunni scholars, all of them agree that the Master of the Faithful is God's Messenger's executor or the best of the executors. His position as executor is referred to explicitly in all these narrations. Because Ṭabarānī cites it in *al-Mu'jam al-Kabir*, and says that he only includes authentic *haditths*, there is no doubt about the authenticity of its chain of transmission. Therefore, one should not pay any attention to what Suyūṭī or Mawlā Ali Muttaqī say about 'Abāyah ibn Rab'ī's being weak on account of being Shī'a with extreme Shī'a beliefs, meaning his word cannot be taken, because 'Abāyah ibn Rab'ī was a moderate, not an extremist Shī'a, and a follower of the People of the Household. He was a great man and led prayer at the Shrine. He is praised in the books on *hadith* narrators. Just because whatever *haditths* he relates are about the virtues of the Household, and the Master of the Faithful's succesorship and executorship, which contradicts the principles of Sunnism, Mawlā Ali Muttaqī and Jalāl al-Dīn Suyūṭī accuse him of having extreme Shī'a beliefs and do not accept what he says. There is nothing extreme about

any of 'Abayah ibn Rab'ī's *hadiths*, so there is no excuse for this baseless accusation. The reason for it is obvious!

In any case, these were the *hadiths* on the Prophet's deathbed declarations to his daughter Fāṭimah, pertaining to Ali ibn Abī Ṭālib's executorship.

Apart from the deathbed declarations, Khārazmī relates in his book *Maqtal al-Husayn* (Najaf, vol. 1, p. 67):

فَاخْتَارَ مِنْهُمْ زَوْجَكِ عَلِيّاً فَجَعَلَهُ لِي اخاً وَوَصِيّاً..

He chose Ali out of them as your husband and appointed him as a brother and executor for me.

Also in this book (vol. 1, p. 96) in the *hadith* on the ascension (*mi'rāj*), the Prophet says to Abū Sa'īd Khudrī,

God spoke to me, saying:

يَا مُحَمَّدُ اِنَّكَ افْضَلُ النَّبِيِّينَ وَ عَلِيّاً افْضَلُ الْوَصِيِّينَ..

O Mohammad, you are the best of the Prophets and Ali is the best of the executors.

There are other *hadith* from the Prophet that say: "Whoever's home this star falls on is my executor." Thereafter, everyone expected the star to fall on his house, especially 'Abbās ibn 'Abd al-Muṭṭalib, because he expected it more than anyone else. However, the star fell on 'Ali ibn Abī Ṭālib's house.

It must be known that the star here means a special light like a star visible to everyone, like those seen by mystics when embarking on their journeys.

A large number of Imāmī scholars narrate this *hadith* on the authority of Sunni exegesis, *hadiths*, and history books.

One of them is 'Allāmah Baḥrānī, who on page 409 of *Ghāyat al-Marām* records two Sunni *hadith*, and on pages 409–411, eleven Shī'a *hadith*.

The Star's Falling on Ali's House is a Sign of Executorship

Ibn al-Maghāzilī Ali ibn Muhammad narrates two *hadiths* recalling the incident. The first is via his chain of transmission from Anas ibn Mālik in *al-Manāqib*, cited by 'Allāmah Baḥrānī in *Ghāyah al-Marām* (p. 409).

عَنْ اَنَسٍ قَالَ: اَنْقَضَّ كَوْكَبٌ عَلَى عَهْدِ رَسُولِ اللهِ صلى الله عليه و آله وسلم فَقَالَ رَسُولُ اللهِ صلى الله عليه و آله وسلم: مَنِ انْقَضَّ هذَا النَّجْمُ فِى دارِهِ فَهُوَ الْخَلِيفَةُ مِنْ بَعْدِى، فَنَظَرُوا فَاذا هُوَ قَدِ انْقَضَّ فِى مَنْزِلِ عَلِىٍّ، فَاَنْزَلَ اللهُ تَعالى:

وَالنَّجْمِ اذا هَوى ما ضَلَّ صاحِبُكُمْ وَما غَوى وَما يَنْطِقُ عَنِ الْهَوى اِنْ هُوَ اِلّا وَحْىٌ يُوحى.

Anas says:

> A star fell during God's Messenger's (s) lifetime, and so God's Messenger (s) said: Whoever's house this star falls on will be my successor after I die. [The people] looked, and lo, it fell on Ali's house. The Transcendent God then revealed: ... *By the star when it plunges, your companion strays not, nor is he misguided. Nor does he speak on a whim; this is naught but inspired inspiration.* (53:1–4)

The second is the *hadith* narrated by Ibn al-Maghāzilī in *al-Manāqib* via his chain of transmission from Sa'īd ibn Jubayr from Ibn 'Abbās, by Ganjī Shāfi'ī in the exact same words via the exact same chains of transmission in *Kifāyah al-Ṭālib* Kulaynī, Muhammad ibn Ya'qūb (p. 131) and by Ibn 'Asākir in *Tārīkh Dimishq al-Kabīr* (*The Great History of Damascus*), in the volume on the Master of the Faithful Ali ibn Abī Ṭālib's virtues. This manuscript is unpublished, but it can be found ir various libraries around the world. The original manuscript in the Ẓāhiriyyah Library in Damascus has been photocopied, and this copy is recorded on page 101 of the library catalogue of the Master of the Faithful Library in Holy Najaf. Ibn 'Asākir narrates the *hadith* from Abū Ghalib ibn al-Bannā' on the authority of Ibn 'Abbās, and 'Allāmah Baḥrānī also narrates it on the authority of Ibn al-Maghāzilī in *Ghāyat al-Marām* (p. 409):

عَنِ ابْنِ عَبّاسٍ قالَ: كُنْتُ جالِساً مَعَ فِتْيَةٍ مِنْ بَنى هاشِمٍ عِنْدَ النَّبِىِّ صلى الله عليه و آله وسلم اِذَا انْقَضَّ كَوْكَبٌ، فَقالَ رَسُولُ اللهِ صلى الله عليه و آله وسلم: مَنِ انْقَضَّ هذَا النَّجْمُ فِى مَنْزِلِهِ فَهُوَ الْوَصِىُّ مِنْ بَعْدِى. فَقامَ فِتْيَةٌ مِنْ بَنى هاشِمٍ فَنَظَرُوا فَاِذَا الْكَوْكَبُ قَدِ انْقَضَّ فِى مَنْزِلِ عَلِىِّ بْنِ ابيطالِبٍ. قالُوا: يا رَسُولَ اللهِ غَوَيْتَ فِى حُبِّ عَلِىٍّ، فَاَنْزَلَ اللهُ:

وَالنَّجْمِ اذا هَوى ما ضَلَّ صاحِبُكُمْ وَما غَوى ـ اِلى قَوْلِهِ: ـ بِالْاُفُقِ الْاَعْلى.

Ibn 'Abbās says:

I was sitting with some Hāshimite youths with the Prophet (s), when a star fell. God's Messenger said: "Whoever's house this star falls on is going to be my executor after I die." Some Hāshimite youths stood up to see, and lo, the star had fallen on Ali ibn Abī Ṭālib's house. They said: "God's Messenger, you are misguided in love for Ali." Thereafter, God revealed:

By the star when it plunges, your companion strays not, nor is he misguided. Nor does he speak on a whim...when he was on the uppermost horizon. (53:1–7)

These verses about the star falling on the house of Ali are a mysterious proof of his executorship and successorship.

Shaykh Sulaymān Qundūzī Ḥanafī relates in *Yanābī' al-Mawaddah* (p. 239), and Shaykh 'Ubaydullah Ḥanafi relates in *Arjaḥ al-Maṭālib* (West Pakistan, p. 72) from Ibn 'Abbās:

قالَ: كُنّا جُلُوساً بِمَكَّةَ مَعَ طائِفَةٍ مِنْ شُبّابِ قُرَيْشٍ وَفينا رَسُولُ اللهِ صلى الله عليه و آله وسلم اذَا انْقَضَّ نَجْمٌ فَقالَ صلى الله عليه و آله وسلم: مَنِ انْقَضَّ هذَا النَّجْمُ فى مَنْزِلِهِ فَهُوَ وَصِيّى مِنْ بَعْدى. فَقامُوا وَنَظَرُوا وَقَدِ انْقَضَّ فى مَنْزِلِ عَلِيٍّ، فَقالوا: قَدْ ضَلَلْتَ بِعَلِيٍّ، فَنَزَلَتْ: وَالنَّجْمِ اذا هَوى ما ضَلَّ صاحِبُكُمْ وَما غَوى

We were sitting in Mecca with a group of Qurayshi youths including God's Messenger (s) when a star fell. He then said: Whoever's house this star falls on is going to be my executor after I die. They then stood up and looked. The star had fallen on Ali's house. So they said: You are misguided by Ali. Thereafter: *By the star when it plunges, your companion strays not, nor is he misguided; nor does he speak from some whim* (53:3) was revealed.

The other *hadith* say that the God's Messenger has twelve executors. The first of them is Ali ibn Abī Ṭālib and the last one is the Mahdī, the implementer from Mohammad's family. There are a great many such *hadith* related via chains of transmission in different books and recorded by the greatest Shī'a and Sunni traditionalists in their books. We are now going to cite a number of Sunni ones to illustrate our point.

Hadith Indicating Ali's and His Offspring's Executorship

One: At the end of part two of *Farā'id al-Simṭayn*, Ḥamwīnī Shāfi'ī relates via his chain of transmission from Sa'īd ibn Jubayr:

قالَ رَسُولُ اللهِ صلى الله عليه و آله وسلم: انَّ عَلِيَّ بنَ ابيطالِبٍ امامُ امَّتى وَ خَليفَتى عَلَيها بَعدى، وَ مِن وُلْدِهِ القائِمُ المُنتَظَرُ الَّذى يَمْلَأُ الأرضَ قِسطاً وَ عَدلاً كَما مُلِئَتْ جَوراً وَ ظُلماً. وَ الَّذى بَعَثَنى بِالحَقِّ بَشيراً وَ نَذيراً انَّ الثّابِتينَ عَلَى القَوْلِ بِامامَتِهِ فى زَمانِ غَيْبَتِهِ لَاعَزُّ مِنَ الكِبريتِ الأحمَرِ. فَقامَ اليهِ جابِرُ بنُ عَبدِ اللهِ الأنصارِيُّ فَقالَ: يا رَسُولَ اللهِ وَ لِلقائِمِ مِن وُلْدِكَ غَيبَةٌ؟ قالَ: اى وَ رَبّى لِيُمَحِّصَ اللهُ الَّذينَ آمَنُوا وَ يَمْحَقَ الكافِرينَ. يا جابِرُ انَّ هذَا الأمرَ مِن امرِ اللهِ وَ سِرٌّ مِن سِرِّ اللهِ، عِلَّتُهُ مَطْوِيَّةٌ عَن عِبادِهِ، فَاِيّاكَ وَ الشَّكَّ فَانَّ الشَّكَّ فى امرِ اللهِ كُفرٌ.

God's Messenger (s) said:

> Surely, Ali ibn Abī Ṭālib is the Imam of my nation, and my successor to it after I die. The awaited implementer, who will fill the earth with equity and justice as it has been filled with inequity and injustice, is from his offspring. I swear by Him Who sent me with the truth, as a bringer of glad tidings and as a warner, that those who steadfastly attest to his leadership in his absence are more precious than red sulfur!

Jābir ibn 'Abdullāh al-Anṣārī then stood up facing him and asked: "God's Messenger! Will the implementer from your offspring have an absence?" He replied:

> Yes, by my Lord, for God to test those who believe and efface the unbelievers. Jābir, surely this affair is of God's affair and one of God's secrets. The reason for it (*'illatuhu*) is concealed from His servants, so beware of doubt because doubt about God's affair is unbelief.[183]

Two: Narrated by 'Allāmah Ḥamwīnī Shāfi'ī, in *Farā'id al-Simṭayn* (vol. 1, chapter 5), from Hasan ibn Khālid, from Ali ibn Mūsā al-Riḍā, from his father, from his forefathers, and, by 'Allāmah Baḥrānī in *Ghāyah al-Marām* (p. 35), in the same words and via the same chain of transmission:

قالَ رَسُولُ اللهِ صلى الله عليه و آله وسلم: مَنْ احَبَّ انْ يَتَمَسَّكَ بِدينى وَ يَرْكَبَ سَفينَةَ النَّجاةِ بَعدى فَلْيَقْتَدِ بِعَلِىِّ بنِ ابى طالِبٍ، وَ لْيُعادِ عَدُوَّهُ، وَ لْيُوالِ وَلِيَّهُ، فَانَّهُ وَصِيّى وَ خَليفَتى عَلى امَّتى فى حَياتى وَ بَعدَ وَفاتى، وَ هُوَ امامُ كُلِّ مُسلِمٍ، وَ اميرُ كُلِّ مُؤمِنٍ بَعدى، قَوْلُهُ قَوْلى، وَ امْرُهُ امْرى، وَ نَهْيُهُ نَهْيى، وَ تابِعُهُ تابِعى، وَ ناصِرُهُ ناصِرى، وَ خاذِلُهُ خاذِلى. ثُمَّ قالَ صلى الله عليه و آله وسلم: مَنْ فارَقَ عَلِيّاً بَعدى لَمْ يَرَنى وَ لَمْ اَرَهُ يَوْمَ القِيامَةِ، وَ مَنْ خالَفَ عَلِيّاً حَرَّمَ اللهُ عَلَيهِ الجَنَّةَ وَ جَعَلَ مَأْواهُ النّارَ، وَ مَنْ خَذَلَ عَلِيّاً خَذَلَهُ اللهُ يَوْمَ يُعْرَضُ عَلَيْهِ، وَ مَنْ نَصَرَ

عَلِيّاً نَصَرَهُ اللهُ يَوْمَ يَلْقاهُ، وَ لَقَّنَهُ حُجَّتَهُ عِنْدَ الْمَسْأَلَةِ. ثُمَّ قالَ صلى الله عليه و آله و سلم: وَ الْحَسَنُ وَ الْحُسَيْنُ اماما اُمَّتي بَعْدَ ابيهما وَ سَيِّدا شَبابِ اهْلِ الْجَنَّةِ، اُمُّهُما سَيِّدَةُ نِساءِ الْعالَمينَ، وَ ابُوهُما سَيِّدُ الْوَصِيّينَ، وَ مِنْ وُلْدِ الْحُسَيْنِ تِسْعَةُ ائِمَّةٍ تاسِعُهُمْ الْقائِمُ مِنْ وُلْدي، طاعَتُهُمْ طاعَتي وَ مَعْصِيَتُهُمْ مَعْصِيَتي، الَى اللهِ اشْكُو الْمُنْكِرينَ لِفَضْلِهِمْ وَ الْمُضيعينَ لِحُرْمَتِهِمْ بَعْدي، وَ كَفى بِاللهِ وَلِيّاً وَ ناصِراً لِعِتْرَتي وَ ائِمَّةِ اُمَّتي، وَ مُنْتَقِماً مِنَ الْجاحدين حقهم وَسَيَعْلَمُ الَّذينَ ظَلَمُوا اىَّ مُنْقَلَبٍ يَنْقَلِبُونَ.

God's Messenger (s) said:

> Whoever wants to cling to my religion and board my ark after my death must follow Ali ibn Abī Ṭālib, be friends with Ali's friends, be an enemy to his enemies, and love whoever loves him, because he is my executor and successor to my nation within my lifetime and after my passing away. He is the Imam of every Muslim and the master of every believer. His word is my word, his command is my command, his prohibition is my prohibition, his follower is my follower, his helper is my helper, and whoever deserts him deserts me.

He then said:

> Whoever leaves Ali will not see me and I will not see him on the Day of Judgment. God will deprive whoever opposes Ali of Heaven and make Hell his abode. On the day he is presented to Him, God will forsake whoever forsakes Ali. On the day he meets Him, God will help whoever helps Ali—and prompt him with his proof when he is questioned.

He then said:

> Hasan and Husayn are the Imams of my nation after their father and the chiefs of Heaven's youths. Their mother is the chief of all the world's women. Their father is the chief of the Messengers' successors. From Husayn's offspring there will be nine Imams, the ninth of whom is the implementer from my offspring. Obedience to them is obedience to me and disobedience to them is disobedience to me. I will complain to God about those who deny their virtues and who denigrate them. God suffices as a Guardian and Helper to my Household and the Imams of my nation, and as the Avenger against those who reject their rights. *And those who do wrong will soon come to know what adversity they shall fall upon!*

Three: The *hadith* narrated by Ḥamwīnī at the end of part two of *Farā'id al-Simṭayn* via his chain of transmission from Sa'īd ibn Jubayr

from 'Abdullāh ibn 'Abbās from the Prophet and narrated by Baḥrānī in *Ghāyat al-Marām* (43, p. 692).

قالَ ابنُ عَبّاسٍ: قالَ رَسُولُ اللهِ صلى الله عليه و آله وسلم: انَّ خُلَفائي وَاوْصِيائي لَاثْنا عَشَرَ، اوَّلُهُمْ اخي وَ آخِرُهُمْ وَلَدي، قيلَ: يا رَسُولَ اللهِ وَمَنْ اخُوكَ؟ قالَ: عَلِيُّ بْنُ ابيطالِبٍ. قيلَ: فَمَنْ وَلَدُكَ؟ قالَ: المَهْدِيُّ الَّذي يَمْلَأُها قِسْطاً وَعَدْلاً كَما مُلِئَتْ جَوْراً وَظُلْما. وَالَّذي بَعَثَني بِالْحَقِّ بَشيراً لَوْلَمْ يَبْقَ مِنَ الدُّنْيا الّا يَوْمٌ واحِدٌ لَطَوَّلَ اللهُ ذلِكَ اليَوْمَ حَتّى يَخْرُجَ فيهِ وَلَدِيَ المَهْدِيُّ فَيَنْزِلُ رُوحُ اللهِ عيسَى ابْنُ مَرْيَمَ فَيُصَلّي خَلْفَهُ، وَتُشْرِقُ الْارْضُ بِنُورِ رَبِّها، وَيَبْلُغُ سُلْطانُهُ المَشْرِقَ وَالمَغْرِبَ.

Ibn 'Abbās said:

> God's Messenger (s) said: Surely, my successors and executors are twelve. The first one of them is my brother and the last of them is my descendant (*waladī*). They asked: God's Messenger, who is your brother? He answered: Ali ibn Abī Ṭālib. He was asked: Who is your descendant? He replied:
>
> > The Mahdī, who will fill [the world] with equity and justice as it has been filled with injustice and inequity. By God, Who has sent me with the truth as a bearer of glad tidings, even if the world only has one day left, God will prolong it until my descendant, the Mahdī, reappears on [that day]. Thereafter, the Spirit of God, Jesus, son of Mary, will come down to pray behind him, the earth will shine with the light of its Lord, and the Mahdī's rule will reach the eastern and western horizons.

Four: The *hadith* narrated by Shaykh Sulaymān Qundūzī Ḥanafī in *Yanābī' al-Mawaddah* (p. 447), from Ḥamwīnī's *Farā'id al-Simṭayn*:

وَفي هذَا الْكتاب يعني في «فرائد السمطين» عن سعيد بن جبير عَنِ ابنِ عَبّاسٍ قالَ: قالَ رَسُولُ اللهِ صلى الله عليه و آله وسلم: انَّ خُلَفائي وَاوْصِيائي وَحُجَجَ اللهِ عَلَى الخَلْقِ بَعْدي لَاثْنا عَشَرَ، اوَّلُهُمْ عَلِيٌّ وَ آخِرُهُمْ وَلَدِيَ المَهْدِيُّ، فَيَنْزِلُ رُوحُ اللهِ عيسَى ابْنُ مَرْيَمَ فَيُصَلّي خَلْفَ المَهْدِيِّ، وَتُشْرِقُ الْارْضُ بِنُورِ رَبِّها، وَيَبْلُغُ سُلْطانُهُ المَشْرِقَ وَالمَغْرِبَ.

This book [i.e. *Farā'id al-Simṭayn*] says:

> God's Messenger (s) said:

> My successors and executors—God's proofs for the creatures—after I die will be twelve. The first of them is Ali and the last of them is my descendant. The Spirit of God, Jesus, son of Mary, will come down to pray behind the Mahdī; the earth will shine with the light of its Lord and his rule will reach the eastern and western horizons.

Five: Narrated by Ḥamwīnī in *Farā'id al-Simṭayn*, via his chains of transmission from Abān ibn Abī 'Ayyāsh, from Sulaym ibn Qays al-Hilālī that one day during 'Uthmān's reign, the Master of the Faithful was telling a large group of migrants and helpers in the mosque about his virtues and feats, imploring them by them and taking their acknowledgement of that.

Some of what he said was:

فَأَنْشُدُكُمُ اللهَ اتَعْلَمُونَ حَيْثُ نَزَلَتْ: وَ السّابِقُونَ الْاَوَّلُونَ مِنَ الْمُهاجِرِينَ وَ الْاَنْصارِ ـ السّابِقُونَ السّابِقُونَ اولئِكَ الْمُقَرَّبُونَ، سُئِلَ عَنْهاَ رَسُولُ ـ اللهِ صلى الله عليه و آله وسلم فَقالَ: انْزَلَهَا اللهُ تَعالى ذِكْرُهُ فَخْراً لِاَنْبِيائِهِ وَ اَوْصِيائِهِمْ، فَاَنَا افْضَلُ اَنْبِياءِ اللهِ وَرُسُلِهِ وَ عَلِيُّ بْنُ ابيطالِبٍ وَصِيِّي افْضَلُ الْاَوْصِياءِ؟ قالُوا: اللّٰهُمَّ نَعَمْ.

> I implore you by God, do you know when *And the foremost, the first of the migrants and helpers* (9:100) and *the foremost are the foremost, Those are the favored* (56:10–11) were revealed, God's Messenger was asked about them, so he replied: The Transcendent God revealed them as a boast to His Prophets and their executors because I am the best of God's Prophets and Messengers and Ali ibn Abī Ṭālib—my executor—is the best of the executors.

They replied: O God, yes!
Meanwhile he said:

> Do you know that God's Messenger delivered a sermon on the Day of Ghadīr, saying:

اَيُّهَا النّاسُ اتَعْلَمُونَ انَّ اللهَ عَزَّ وَ جَلَّ مَوْلاىَ وَ اَنَا مَوْلَى الْمُؤْمِنينَ وَ اَوْلى بِهِمْ مِنْ اَنْفُسِهِمْ؟ قالُوا: بَلى يا رَسُولَ اللهِ، قالَ: قُمْ يا عَلِيُّ، فَقُمْتُ، فَقالَ: مَنْ كُنْتُ مَوْلاهُ فَعَلِيٌّ مَوْلاهُ، اللّٰهُمَّ والِ مَنْ والاهُ، وَ عادِ مَنْ عاداهُ. فَقامَ سَلْمانُ فَقالَ: يا رَسُولَ اللهِ وِلاؤُهُ ماذا؟ فَقالَ: وِلاءُ كَوِلائى، مَنْ كُنْتُ اَوْلى بِهِ مِنْ نَفْسِهِ فَعَلِيٌّ اَوْلى بِهِ مِنْ نَفْسِهِ، فَاَنْزَلَ اللهُ تَعالى ذِكْرُهُ:

"اَلْيَوْمَ أَكْمَلْتُ لَكُمْ دِينَكُمْ وَ اَتْمَمْتُ عَلَيْكُمْ نِعْمَتِي وَ رَضِيتُ لَكُمُ الْاِسْلامَ ديناً"، فَكَبَّرَ رَسُولُ اللهِ صلى الله عليه و آله و سلم وَ قالَ: اللهُ اَكْبَرُ عَلى تَمامِ نُبُوَّتي وَ تَمامِ دينِ اللهِ وَ وِلايَةِ عَلِيٍّ بَعْدي. فَقامَ اَبُوبَكْرٍ وَ عُمَرُ فَقالا: يا رَسُولَ اللهِ هذِهِ الْآياتُ خاصَّةٌ في عَلِيٍّ؟ قالَ: بَلى، فيهِ وَ في اَوْصِيائي اِلى يَوْمِ الْقِيامَةِ، قالا: يا رَسُولَ اللهِ: بَيِّنْهُمْ لَنا، قالَ: عَلِيٌّ اَخي وَ وَزيري وَ وارِثي وَ وَصِيّي وَ خَليفَتي في اُمَّتي وَ وَلِيُّ كُلِّ مُؤْمِنٍ بَعْدي، ثُمَّ اِبْنِيَ الْحَسَنُ، ثُمَّ الْحُسَيْنُ، ثُمَّ تِسْعَةٌ مِنْ وُلْدِ اِبْنِيَ الْحُسَيْنِ، واحِداً بَعْدَ واحِدٍ، اَلْقُرْآنُ مَعَهُمْ، وَ هُمْ مَعَ الْقُرْآنِ، لا يُفارِقُونَهُ وَ لا يُفارِقُهُمْ حَتّى يَرِدا عَلَيَّ الْحَوْضَ؟ فَقالُوا: كُلُّهُمْ: اَللّهُمَّ نَعَمْ قَدْ سَمِعْنا ذلِكَ وَ شَهِدْنا كَما قُلْتَ سَواءً، وَ قالَ بَعْضُهُمْ: قَدْ حَفِظْنا جُلَّ ما قُلْتَ وَ لَمْ نَحْفَظْ كُلَّهُ وَ هؤُلاءِ الَّذينَ حَفِظُوا اَخْيارُنا وَ افاضِلُنا، فَقالَ عَلِيٌّ عليه السلام: لَيْسَ كُلُّ النّاسِ يَسْتَوُونَ في الْحِفْظِ.

O people, do you know that God, Mighty and Sublime is He, is my Master, I am the Master of the Believers—and I have greater authority over them than they have over their [own] selves?

They replied: Yes, God's Messenger.

He (s) said: Ali, stand up. So I stood up and he said: Whoever's Master I am, Ali [too] is his Master. O God, love who loves him, and be an enemy to whoever is an enemy to him.

Thereafter, Salmān stood up and asked: "God's Messenger! What is his authority (*walā'uhū*)? He replied:

> His authority is like my authority over you. Over whomsoever I have greater authority than he over himself, so [too] does Ali have greater authority that he over himself.

The Transcendent God then revealed His Remembrance:

اَلْيَوْمَ أَكْمَلْتُ لَكُمْ دِينَكُمْ وَ اَتْمَمْتُ عَلَيْكُمْ نِعْمَتِي وَ رَضِيتُ لَكُمُ الْاِسْلامَ ديناً

This day have I perfected your religion for you and completed My favor unto you, and have chosen for you Islam as your religion. (5:3)

God's Messenger then said: God is too Great [to be described] (*Allāhu Akbar*) for the completion of my prophecy, the completion of God's religion, as Ali's being Master after me.

Then, Abū Bakr and 'Umar stood up and said: God's Messenger, are these verses exclusively about Ali ibn Abī Ṭālib?

He replied: Yes, about him and my executors until the Day of Resurrection.

They said: God's Messenger, make them clear for us. He said:

> Ali, my brother, vizier, heir, executor, successor to my nation, and master over every believer after me, then my "sons" Ḥasan and

Ḥusayn, then nine from my "son" Ḥusayn's offspring—one after another. The Qur'an is with them and they are with the Qur'an—they will not separate from it and it will not separate from them until they both come to me at the Pool.

They all replied: O God, yes! We both heard that and witnessed as you said. Some of them said: "We remember most of what you said, but do not remember all of it. Those who remember are the best and most meritorious among us.

Ali (as) then said: People are not all the same at remembering.
And his words:

انْشُدُكُمُ اللهَ أَتَعْلَمُونَ انَّ رَسُولَ اللهِ صلى الله عليه و آله وسلم قَامَ خَطِيباً ثُمَّ لَمْ يَخْطُبْ بَعْدَ ذٰلِكَ فَقَالَ: يا ايُّهَا النَّاسُ، انِّي تارِكٌ فِيكُمُ الثَّقَلَيْنِ كِتابَ اللهِ وَ عِتْرَتِي اهْلَ بَيْتِي، تَتَمَسَّكُوا بِهِما لَنْ تَضِلُّوا، فَانَّ اللَّطِيفَ الْخَبِيرَ اخْبَرَنِي وَ عَهِدَ الَيَّ انَّهُما لَنْ يَفْتَرِقا حَتّٰى يَرِدا عَلَيَّ الْحَوْضَ. فَقَامَ عُمَرُ بْنُ الْخَطّابِ شِبْهَ الْمُغْضَبِ فَقَالَ: يا رَسُولَ اللهِ، اكُلُّ اهْلِ بَيْتِكَ؟ فَقَالَ: لا، وَ لٰكِنْ اوْصِيائِي مِنْهُمْ، اوَّلُهُمْ اخِي وَ وَزِيرِي وَ وارِثِي وَ خَلِيفَتِي فِي امَّتِي وَ وَلِيُّ كُلِّ مُؤْمِنٍ بَعْدِي، هُوَ اوَّلُهُمْ ثُمَّ الْحَسَنُ ثُمَّ ابْنِي الْحُسَيْنُ ثُمَّ تِسْعَةٌ مِنْ وُلْدِ الْحُسَيْنِ، واحِداً بَعْدَ واحِدٍ حَتّٰى يَرِدُوا عَلَيَّ الْحَوْضَ، شُهَداءُ اللهِ فِي ارْضِهِ وَ حُجَّتُهُ عَلٰى خَلْقِهِ وَ خُزّانُ عِلْمِهِ وَ مَعادِنُ حِكْمَتِهِ، مَنْ اطاعَهُمْ فَقَدْ اطاعَ اللهَ، وَ مَنْ عَصاهُمْ فَقَدْ عَصَى اللهَ؟ فَقالُوا كُلُّهُمْ: نَشْهَدُ انَّ رَسُولَ اللهِ صلى الله عليه و آله وسلم قالَ ذٰلِكَ.

I implore you by God, do you know that God's Messenger (s) stood delivering a sermon after which he gave no other sermon, saying:

People, I am leaving among you two weighty things, God's Book and my close relations (*'itrati*), the People of my Household, so cling to them and you will never stray, because God, the Gracious, the Knowing has informed me and covenanted unto me that they will not separate from each other until they come to me at the Pool.

'Umar then stood up like an angry [man] and asked: God's Messenger, all the People of your Household?
He answered:

No, just the executors among them. The first of them is my brother, vizier, heir, successor to my nation, and master to every believer after I die. He is the first of them, then Hasan and then my "son," Ḥusayn, then nine from Ḥusayn's offspring, one after

> the other until they come to me at the Pool, God's witnesses on the earth, His proofs for His creatures, the repositories of God's Knowledge, and depositories of His wisdom. Whoever obeys them in fact obeys God and whoever disobeys them disobeys God.
>
> They all replied: We testify that God's Messenger (s) said that.

We have quoted these parts of this *hadith* from *'Alī wa al-Waṣiyyah*. That book contains all its parts on pages 157 to 163.

We should know that the Master of the Faithful implored the people several times:

First: In the Prophet's mosque after the Great Messenger's death.

Second: After the death of 'Umar ibn al-Khaṭṭāb with the members of the council when he relied on his statuses and virtues, especially his status as executor, vizier and caliph.

Third: In the Prophet's mosque during 'Uthmān's reign when a large number of Immigrants and supporters had gathered just before noon prayer and each of them was talking about a particular person's virtues. The Imam remained silent until they asked: "O Ali ibn Abī Ṭālib, you have not said anything." It was then the Holiness started to implore them, explaining his merits and feats, relying on as evidence Qur'anic verses, events that had occurred during the Prophet's lifetime and his words. Through his adjuration, he proved that the caliphate was his and no one else's, and that the previous "caliphs" had usurped it.

There are several *hadith* about his adjuration during 'Uthmān's reign, which differ from each other in wording.

The most important of them is related by 'Allāmah Baḥrānī in *Ghāyah al-Marām* (pp. 549–553, chapter 54), from Sulaym ibn Qays al-Kūfī, and he from Salmān Farsi. This *hadith* has been divided into two parts in the original edition published in Najaf without any omission. The first part is on pages 69 to 73 and the second on pages 79 to 92. He also relates it in *'Alī wa al-Waṣiyyah*, under the heading *Hadith* 33. The *hadith* itself starts on page 72 and detailed commentary on it runs on until page 130. The *hadith* is also narrated in *Ghāyat al-Marām* (pp. 67, 68). An abridged version also appears on page 642.

This *hadith*, known as the Hadith *of Adjuration*, is related by many Shī'a and Sunni scholars via an unbroken chain of transmission and recorded in their books. This includes Ḥamwīnī Shāfi'ī in *Farā'id al-Simṭayn*, Khārazmī Ḥanafī in *Manāqib* (p. 217), Shaykh Sulaymān

Qundūzī Ḥanafī in *Yanābī' al-Mawaddah* (p. 114), and Ibn Ḥajar Haythamī in *al-Ṣawā'iq al-Muḥriqah* (p. 77). Apart from in *Ghāyat al-Marām*, 'Allāmah Baḥrānī also cites it in a book called *al-Manāqib* with comments by 'Allāmah Sharīf 'Askarī, known as *Ali wa al-Sunnah*. Ibn Shahr Āshūb divides the *Hadith* of Adjuration into parts in *al-Manāqib*, placing each part in the relevant chapter. For example, in the chapter on Executorship and guardianship (vol. 1, p.542), he quotes the paragraph on executorship:

الطَّبرِیُّ بِاسنادِهِ عَنْ اَبِی الطُّفَیلِ اَنَّهُ علیه السلام قالَ لِاَصحابِ الشُّوری: اناشِدُکُمُ اللهَ هَلْ تَعلَمُونَ اَنَّ لِرَسُولِ اللهِ صلی الله علیه و آله وسلم وَصِیّاً غَیری؟ قالُوا: اللّهُمَّ لا.

"Ṭabarī via his chain of narration from Abū al-Ṭufayl says Ali (as) said to the members of the council, 'I implore you by God, do you know of God's Messenger (s) having any executor apart from me?' They said, 'O, God, no!'"

As for his adjuration of the members of the council after 'Umar's death, it appears in *'Alī wa al-Waṣiyyah* (pp. 126–130).

Others include *hadiths* in which the Prophet commands the people to follow the Master of the Faithful and presents him to them as the executor, obedience to whom is mandatory. There are a lot of these *hadiths*, and here we shall cite a few of them.

In volume 1 of *Tārīkh Dimishq al-Kabīr*—a copy of the Ẓāhiriyyah Library's (Damascus) original manuscript is housed in the Master of the Faithful Library in Holy Najaf under catalogue entry 11—Ibn 'Asākir relates some of the Master of the Faithful's merits via his chain of transmission on the authority of Ibn 'Abbās:

سَتَکُونُ فِتنَةٌ فَاِن اَدرَکَها اَحَدٌ مِنکُم فَعَلَیهِ بِخَصلَتَینِ کِتابِ اللهِ وَ عَلِیِّ بنِ اَبی طالِبٍ، فَاِنّی سَمِعتُ رَسُولَ اللهِ صلی الله علیه و آله وسلم یَقُولُ ـ وَهُوَ آخِذٌ بِیَدِ عَلِیٍّ ـ: هذا اَوَّلُ مَن آمَنَ بی وَاَوَّلُ مَن یُصافِحُنی یَومَ القِیامَةِ وَهُوَ فارُوقُ هذِهِ الاُمَّةِ یُفَرِّقُ بَینَ الحَقِّ وَ الباطِلِ، وَهُوَ یَعسُوبُ المُؤمِنینَ وَ المالُ یَعسُوبُ الظّالِمینَ، وَهُوَ الصِّدّیقُ الاَکبَرُ، وَهُوَ بابِیَ الَّذی اوتی مِنهُ، وَهُوَ خَلیفَتی مِن بَعدی.

Ibn 'Abbās says:

> There will be sedition, so if any of you live to see it, he should turn to two things: the Book of God and Ali ibn Abī Ṭālib, because I heard God's Messenger (s) say while taking Ali by the hand:

This is the first person to believe in me and will be the first to shake my hand on the Day of Resurrection. He is the separator for this nation, separating right from wrong. He is the drone of the believers, and money is the drone of the wrong-doers. He is the greatest righteous one and my door through which I am visited. He is my successor after I die.

Ibn Shahr Āshūb narrates in *al-Manāqib*, (vol. 1, p. 543) from Abū Rāfi':

قالَ: لَمّا كانَ اليَوْمُ الَّذى تُوُفِّىَ فيهِ رَسُولُ اللهِ صلى الله عليه و آله وسلم غُشِيَ عَلَيْهِ فَاَخَذْتُ بِقَدَمَيْهِ اُقَبِّلُهُما وَ ابْكى، فَاَفاقَ وَ اَنَا اَقُولُ: مَنْ لى وَ لِوُلْدى بَعْدَكَ يا رَسُولَ اللهِ؟ فَرَفَعَ اِلَىَّ رَأْسَهُ وَ قالَ: اللهُ بَعْدى وَ وَصِيّى صالِحُ المُؤْمِنينَ.

On the day when God's Messenger passed away, he fainted, so I took his feet, kissed them, and cried. He came to while I was saying: "Who is there for me and my children after you, God's Messenger?" So he lifted his head up to me and said: "God [is still there] after I die, and my executor, the pious one among the believers."

On page 248 of *Yanābī' al-Mawaddah*, there is a *hadith* on the authority of Ibn 'Abbās, who says:

دعانى رَسُولُ اللهِ صلى الله عليه و آله وسلم فَقالَ لى: اِبْشِرْكَ اَنَّ اللهَ تَعالى اَيَّدَنى بِسَيِّدِ الْاَوَّلينَ وَ الْآخِرينَ وَ الْوَصِيّينَ عَلِىٍّ فَجَعَلَهُ كُفْوا بِنْتى، فَاِنْ اَرَدْتَ اَنْ تَنْتَفِعَ فَاتَّبِعْهُ.

God's Messenger (s) called me and told me: I give you glad tidings that the Transcendent God, the Almighty, has supported me with the chief of the first, last, and all the executors, Ali, and He has made him a match for my daughter. So if you want to benefit, follow him.

In *Yanābī' al-Mawaddah* (p. 239), it is related from Anas ibn Mālik:

قالَ: رَاَيْتُ رَسُولَ اللهِ صلى الله عليه و آله وسلم جالِساً مَعَ عَلِىٍّ فَقالَ: اَنَا وَ هذا حُجَّةُ اللهِ عَلى خَلْقِهِ.

I saw the Prophet sitting with Ali and saying: 'This [man] and I are God's Proof for His creatures.'

It is narrated by the author of *al-Ferdaus* and Imam Ahmad.

Our discussion on *hadiths* has become prolix, even though we have not even cited a tenth of them. We conclude with a *hadith* from the Master of the Martyrs referring to many virtues.

Yanābī' al-Mawaddah (chapter 41, p. 123) quotes Khārazmī's *Manāqib* on the authority of Abū Saīd Aqīṣā, that the Master of the Martyrs, Ḥusayn ibn Ali, related from his father that:

قالَ رَسُولُ اللهِ صلى الله عليه و آله وسلم: يا عَلِيُّ انتَ اخي وَانَا اخُوكَ، انَا المُصطَفى لِلنُبُوَّةِ وَانتَ المُجتَبى لِلإمامَةِ. انَا وَانتَ ابَوا هذِهِ الأُمَّةِ، وَانتَ وَصِيّي وَوارِثي وَابُو وُلدي، اتباعُكَ اتباعي وَاوْلِياؤُكَ اوْلِيائي وَ اعداؤُكَ اعدائي، وَانتَ صاحِبي عَلَى الحَوضِ وَصاحِبي فِي المَقامِ المَحمُودِ وَصاحِبُ لِوائي فِي الآخِرَةِ كَما انتَ صاحِبُ لِوائي فِي الدُّنيا. لَقَدْ سَعِدَ مَنْ تَوَلّاكَ وَشَقِيَ مَنْ عاداكَ وَانَّ المَلائِكَةَ لَتَتَقَرَّبُ الَى اللهِ بِحُبِّكَ وَ وِلايَتِكَ، وَانَّ اهلَ مَوَدَّتِكَ فِي السَّماءِ اكثَرُ مِنْ اهلِ الأرضِ. يا عَلِيُّ انتَ حُجَّةُ اللهِ عَلَى النّاسِ بَعدي، قَوْلُكَ قَوْلي، امرُكَ امري، نَهيُكَ نَهْيي، وَطاعَتُكَ طاعَتي، وَمَعصِيَتُكَ مَعصِيَتي، وَحِزبُكَ حِزبي، وَحِزبي حِزبُ اللهِ. ثُمَّ قَرَأَ: "وَمَنْ يَتَوَلَّ اللهَ وَرَسُولَهُ وَالَّذينَ آمَنُوا فَانَّ حِزبَ اللهِ هُمُ الغالِبُونَ."

God's Messenger said:

> O Ali, you are my brother and I your brother. I am chosen for prophecy and you are selected for the Imamate. You and I are the fathers of this nation. You are my executor, heir, and father to my children. Your followers are my followers, your friends are my friends, and your enemies are my enemies. You are my companion over the Pool, my companion in the praiseworthy position, my standard-bearer in the Hereafter, just as you were my standard-bearer in this world.
>
> For sure, whoever takes you as a guardian will prosper, and whoever is an enemy to you will be wretched. The angels gain God's favor through love for you and following you. You have more people who love you in Heaven than on earth.
>
> Ali, after me, you are God's proof for the creatures. Your word is my word, your command is my command, your prohibition is my prohibition, obedience to you is obedience to me, disobedience to you is disobedience to me, your party is my party, and my party is God's party.

He then recited:

وَمَنْ يَتَوَلَّ اللهَ وَرَسُولَهُ وَالَّذينَ آمَنُوا فَانَّ حِزبَ اللهِ هُمُ الغالِبُونَ.

And whoever takes God and His Messenger and those who believe for a guardian, then surely the party of God are they that shall be triumphant. (5:56)

In this blessed *hadith*, God's Messenger explains the Master of the Faithful's status as Imam, executor, caliph, and father, and considers him to be an equal partner to him in all respects such that disobedience to Ali and his followers and of his commands and prohibitions is like disobedience to the Prophet and his followers and of his commands and prohibitions. He presents him as the Proof like himself on earth. He attributes prosperity to taking him as guardian and wretchedness to disassociating oneself from him. In short, he considers him to be the only person and his to be the only example to follow. Conversely, aversion to him is wretchedness, misery, and perdition itself.

Sayyid Ḥimyari's Poetry

Blessed Sayyid Ismā'īl Ḥimyari says:

مَنْ ذَا الَّذی اوْصی اِلَیْهِ مُحَمَّدٌ یَقْضِی الْعِداتِ فَانْفَذَ الایصاء.

He whom Mohammad appointed as executor
Fulfills the promises and implemented the executorship.[184]

And:

وَصِیُّ مُحَمَّدٍ وَاَبُو بَنِیْهِ وَاَوَّلُ سَاجِدٍ لِلّٰهِ صَلّٰی.

Mohammad's heir and father to his children and the first prostrator to God prayed![185]

He then says:

وَکَانَ قَلْبِی حِینَ یَذْکُرُ اَحْمَدا وَوَصِیَّ اَحْمَدَ نِیطَ مِنْ ذِی مِخْلَبِ
یِذْرَی الْقَوَادِمِ مِنْ جَنَاحِ مُصَعَّدٍ فِی الْجَوِّ اَوْ بِذُرَی جَنَاحِ مُصَوِّبِ
حَتّٰی یَکَادَ مِنَ النِّزَاعِ اِلَیْهِما یُفْرِی الْحِجَابَ عَنِ الضُّلُوعِ الصُّلَّبِ

My heart whenever it remembers Ahmad,
And Ahmad's executor is the heart of a taloned [bird]
Lifted into the air by the top of its front wing feathers
Or pushed down by the top of its wing
Till the covering is nearly rent from the hard ribs
from the struggle towards them both [at once].[186]

مُحَمَّدٌ خَیْرُ بَنِی غَالِبٍ وَبَعْدَهُ ابْنُ اَبِی طَالِبٍ
هٰذَا نَبِیٌّ وَوَصِیٌّ لَهُ وَیُعْزَلُ الْعَالِمُ فِی جَانِبٍ

Mohammad is the best of the Bani Ghālib
After him is Ibn Abī Ṭālib,
This is the Prophet, and he has an executor,
And he puts the whole world on one side![187]

فَيَقُولُ فيهِ مُعلِناً خَيرُ الوَرى جَهراً وَما ناجى بِهِ اسرارا
هذا وَصِيّي فيكُمُ وَخَليفَتي لا تَجهَلوهُ فَتَرجِعوا كُفّارا

Proclaiming the Best of Creation says about him,
Out loud, not whispering secretly,
This is my executor and caliph among you,
Do not be ignorant of him and turn away as unbelievers![188]

فَطوبى لِمَن امسى لِآلِ مُحَمَّدٍ وَلِيّاً اماماهُ شَبَيرٌ وَشُبَّرُ
وَقَبلَهُما وَصِيُّ مُحَمَّدٍ عَلِيٌّ امِيرُ المُؤمِنينَ المُطَهَّرُ

Blessed is he who wakes up in the afternoon, following Mohammad's family—his Imams: Shubayr and Shubbar
Before them the guide (*al-Hādī*),
Mohammad's executor,
Ali, the cleansed Master of the Faithful.[189]

عَلِيٌّ امامٌ وَصِيُّ النَّبِيّ بِمَحضَرِهِ قَد دَعاهُ اميرا
وَكانَ الخَصيصَ بِهِ فِي الحَياة فَصاهَرَهُ وَاجتَباهُ عَشيرا

Ali is an Imam, the Prophet's executor,
He called him Master in his presence
He was his confidant in life,
So he made him his in-law and chose him as a companion.[190]

هذا اخي وَوَصِيّي فِي الأَمرِ وَمَن يَقومُ فيكُم مَقامي عِندَ تَذكاري

This is my brother, executor of affairs, and he who
Will take my place among you when you remember me.[191]

عَلِيٌّ وَصِيُّ المُصطَفى وَوَزيرُهُ وَناصِرُهُ وَالبَيضُ بِالبَيضِ تُقرَعُ
وَاكرَمُ خَلقِ اللهِ صِنوُ مُحَمَّدٍ وَمَن لَيسَ عَن فَضلٍ اذا عُدَّ يُدفَعُ

Ali is the chosen one's vizier and helper
Eggs are cracked on other eggs
The noblest of God's creatures, Mohammad's twin
Who cannot be knocked back when virtue is recounted[192]

اشهَدُ بِاللهِ وَآلائِهِ وَالمَرءُ عَمّا قالَهُ يُسئَلُ

انَّ عَلِيَّ بْنَ ابيطالِبِ خَليفَةُ اللهِ الَّذى يَعْدِلُ
وَانَّهُ قَدْكانَ مِنْ احْمَد كَمِثْلِ هارُونَ وَلا مُرْسَلُ
لكِنْ وَصِيٌّ خازِنٌ عِنْدَهُ عِلْمٌ مِنَ اللهِ بِهِ يَعْمَلُ

I testify by God and His blessings
And man is answerable for what he says,
That Ali ibn Abī Ṭālib
Is God's caliph who is just
And that he was like Aaron to Ahmad,
Just, not an envoy
But an executor, a repository; he has knowledge from God to be acted upon![193]

And 'Utbah ibn Abī Lahab said, addressing 'Ā'ishah:

اعايِشُ خَلّى عَنْ عَلِيٍّ وَعَتْبِهِ بِمالَيْسَ فيهِ أنْماانْتَ والِدَهْ
وَصي رَسُولِ اللهِ مِنْ دُونِ اهْلِهِ فَأَنْتِ عَلى ماكانَ مِنْ ذاكِ شاهِدَهْ

O, Ā'ishah! Leave Ali alone and criticizing him
For what he deserves not,
You are just the mother
Of God's Messenger's Executor and not his family
So you are a witness to his being so![194]

And al-Ash'ath ibn Qays al-Kindī wrote in reply to the Master of the Faithful's letter:

اتانَاالرَّسُولُ رَسُولُ الْوَصِيِّ عَلِيُّ الْمُهَذَّبِ مِنْ هاشِمِ
وَصِيُّ النَّبِيِّ وَذُوصِهْرِهِ وَخَيْرُ الْبَرِيَّةِ فِي الْعالَمِ

To us came the Messenger,
The Messenger of the executor,
Ali the pick of the Hāshim,
The executor of the Messenger, his in-law,
And the best of creatures in the world![195]

And Kuthayr 'Azzah says:

وَصِيُّ النَّبِيِّ الْمُصْطَفى وَابْنُ عَمِّهِ وَفَكّاكُ اغْلالٍ وَقاضى مَغارِمِ

The Chosen Prophet's executor, and paternal cousin,
The breaker of chains and the payer of debts![196]

Al-Ṣaḥib ibn 'Abbād says:

اِنَّ الْمَحَبَّةَ لِلْوَصِيِّ فَرِيضَةٌ اَعْنِي اَمِيرَ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ عَلِيّاً
قَدْ كَلَّفَ اللهُ الْبَرِيَّةَ كُلَّهَا وَاخْتَارَهُ لِلْمُؤْمِنِينَ وَلِيّا

Love of the executor—I mean the Commander of the Faithful Ali—
Is a duty imposed by God on all creatures and He chose him as guardian for the believers.[197]

Faḍl ibn 'Abbās says:

وَكَانَ وَلِيَّ الْاَمْرِ بَعْدَ مُحَمَّدٍ عَلِيٌّ وَفِي كُلِّ الْمَوَاطِنِ صَاحِبُهُ
وَصِيُّ رَسُولِ اللهِ حَقّاً وَصِهْرُهُ وَاَوَّلُ مَنْ صَلّى وَمَاذَمَّ جَانِبُه

In charge after Mohammad is Ali, his comrade on every battlefield,
God's Messenger's true executor, and in-law
The first to pray, never leaving his side.[198]

Kumayt says:

وَنِعْمَ وَلِيُّ الْاَمْرِ بَعْدَ نَبِيِّهِ وَمُنْتَجَعُ التَّقْوى وَنِعْمَ الْمُؤَدِّبُ

What a good person in charge he is after his Prophet,
The refuge of piety, and what a good educator.[199]

A careful consideration of what we have explained in this chapter makes it quite clear that there was no doubt about the caliphate and the Guardianship of the Master of the Faithful during the Prophet's lifetime. His caliphate and successorship were clear and certain to all people, and they acknowledged them [through writing and composing poems].

Time and again, while travelling or at home, while fighting or at peace, in private or in public, and in front of friends or foes, whenever the Prophet was asked about his successor, he clearly announced that the Master of the Faithful was to be his successor. He always presented him as:

وَلِيُّ كُلِّ مُسْلِمٍ وَاِمَامُ كُلِّ مُؤْمِنٍ وَقَائِدُ كُلِّ تَقِيٍّ

The Muslims' guardian, the Imam of every believer, and the leader of every God-fearing person.

He also always presented him as:

سَيِّدُ الْمُسْلِمِينَ وَإِمَامُ الْمُتَّقِينَ وَيَعْسُوبُ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ وَسَيِّدُ الْأَوْصِيَاءِ وَسَيِّدُ الْوَصِيِّينَ وَخَيْرُ الْأَوْصِيَاءِ وَخَيْرُ الْوَصِيِّينَ وَأَفْضَلُ الْوَصِيِّينَ.

The chief of all the Muslims, the Imam of the pious, the drone of the believers, the chief of the executors, and the best or most virtuous of the executors.

Ali's Executorship Was Not Just with Regard to God's Messenger's Personal Affairs

His successorship was not restricted to personal affairs, but was linked to matters of prophecy and to his being general guardian to all Muslims. Our proof for that is that he ranked him alongside the other Prophets' executors, such Seth for Adam, Sam for Noah, Joshua for Moses, Simon for Jesus, and Āsif ibn Barkhiyā for Solomon. That is why the Master of the Faithful is called the chief, best, noblest, or most learned of all the executors.

Even when he was sometimes asked, the Prophet would say that the reason for Simon's, Joshua's, and Āsif's executorship was their being the most learned in their entire nations. He said that Ali's executorship was also on this basis, and that Ali and he were the two fathers of this nation and God's two signs for His creatures. Time and again, he referred to him as his caliph both within his lifetime and after his death. Furthermore, he said that Ali ibn Abī Ṭālib and he were from a single tree, from a single light, and two branches off a single root. He would sometimes refer to his successors all together, saying there were twelve of them, *all from Quraysh*:

كُلُّهُمْ مِنْ قُرَيْشٍ

or:

كُلُّهُمْ مِنْ بَنِي هَاشِمٍ

all from the Banī Hāshim.

He also said many times: "My successors are twelve; the first of them is my brother, vizier, heir, and executor, and the last of them is the Mahdī, the implementer out of my offspring."

On other occasions, he would refer to them one by one: "The first of them is Ali ibn Abī Ṭālib. After him is Hasan, then Ḥusayn. After him are nine from his offspring." He would then list them one by one. "The last of them is their implementer, the standard-bearer of Monotheism and justice, and destroyer of polytheism's and injustice's palace."

In some *hadiths* he gives the Imams' full names, one by one. He frequently commands the entire nation to follow Ali ibn Abī Ṭālib, saying that obedience to Ali is obedience to him, disobedience to Ali is disobedience to him, Ali's command is his command, Ali's word is his word, love for Ali is love for him, hatred of Ali is hatred of him, Ali's party and helpers are his party and helpers—his own party being God's party.

He also sometimes says words to the effect that "civil wars will break out after I die, but you should heed God's Book and my executor, Ali ibn Abī Ṭālib, because they will never separate from each other." He always refers to Ali as the chief of the executors, the Imam for the Muslims, the Master of the Faithful, and the people's caliph. He considered happiness and salvation to be in his guardianship and misery and wretchedness to be in aversion to him. Because of his unique knowledge, patience, and status as the earliest Muslim, he deserves to be the successor. The Prophet calls him the fulfiller of his covenant and his heir.

It is clear that the Messenger's covenant was not personal. "Covenant" here means the Prophet's very mission to the entire nation, guiding them to the pinnacle of humanity, which is Monotheism. His covenants are the same that God has put upon his shoulders to fulfill to lead the people to their ideal destination. He has stated:

وانتَ تُسمِعُهُم صَوتِی

... and you will let them hear my voice!

It is obvious that this mission is only carried out by someone who is at the Messenger's level; as he has stated:

وَكَالصِّنوِ مِنَ الصِّنوِ، والذِّراعِ مِنَ العَضُد

...like a twin to its twin and the forearm to the upper arm.

When the Prophet says "heir," he means the inheritance pertaining to God's Messenger's affairs, which passed to Ali ibn Abī Ṭālib.

He is the heir to knowledge, the heir to the position of Monotheism and Divine knowledge, the heir to guardianship of the people and the possession of greater authority over them than they have over themselves, the heir to power and dominion, the heir to enjoining good

deeds and forbidding bad ones, the heir to getting souls to their desired goal, the heir to existential authority over souls and heavens, and the heir to revelation and the Qur'an.

Thus, he stated: "If I were not the Seal of the Messengers, you would be my partner in prophecy. However, you are my executor and successor."

To produce evidence from the unseen world, so that the narrow-minded would not think that Ali's appointment as successor and executor was just something said on a whim because of his relationship to the Messenger both by blood and as his son-in-law, he recognized the falling of the star at Ali's home as a sign or Ali's being the first to come through the door to Anas ibn Mālik.

In any case, the Prophet has confirmed and emphasized everything said in this chapter to make it well understood.

The denial by some fanatical Sunnis is amazing. In spite of witnessing so many explicit, authentic *hadiths* as indubitable, they still cling, like their forefathers, to their false ideas—they interpret "covenants" as personal covenants! They interpret "heir" as heir to trifles, such as the Prophet's swords, hauberk, daggers, and horse! They interpret the executorship as testamentary instruction just to wash, shroud, and bury the Messenger, or at the most, the commendation of the Arabs to his care and so on.

This is palpable in what Muḥib Ṭabarī says in *Dhakhā'ir al-'Uqbā* (p. 72), and in *al-Riyāḍ al-Naḍrah* (vol. 2, p. 178).

Can we interpret the many *hadiths* containing titles such as "the Master of the executors" and "The Best of the Executors" as a reference to minor matters such as washing, shrouding, and burying a dead body?!

What! Should these repetitive warnings and reminders be cast into oblivion? Should we interpret being the fulfiller of his covenant and the payer of his debts—two brilliant qualities and signs exclusively attributed by God's Messenger to the Master of the Faithful on so many occasions—as keeping some insignificant promises or repaying a few dirhams?!

All these interpretations make a mockery not only of God's Messenger's words, but also of him as a person, and of Him Who sent him. The motive behind them is to clear the usurper caliphs who derailed the religion from its original track.

If those senior Sunni scholars were honest enough to attribute that idle talk and manipulation to their chiefs who were in charge of the Saqīfah, it would be much better than mocking the Prophet by twisting these words, and interpreting his testamentary instructions regarding

this unique, divinely appointed man who is the epitome of Monotheism, Ali ibn Abī Ṭālib.

If they attributed sins and mistakes to their chiefs and rulers, it would be much better than attributing them to the Prophet. By covering up the crimes of their usurper caliphs, making excuses for their love of prestige and power, and by ruling the Muslims heavy-handedly, they have lost the straight path. Nonetheless, the Prophet has made everything—the Master of the Faithful's guardianship and governorship—quite clear to everyone, leaving no room for doubt. Through their weak interpretations that defy good sense, they have brought down the value and dignity of the bringer of the Message!

Who can claim to believe in the Messenger and know the Master of the Faithful's position, yet still twist these *hadiths* and excuse the wrongdoer's government by saying that it was because of their zeal for Islam, and they just made a mistake?!

We do not expect anything of lay Sunnis; they are weak people. They accept whatever their rulers and scholars give them—they grow with whatever their elders feed them. Our argument is with *hadith* experts.

Our argument is with those who have recorded the virtues of the Master of the Faithful in their books. Our argument is with those who know Arabic literature and understand the Prophet's words but still twist them to serve their own interests. In so doing, they deliberately ignore their wisdom and reasoning. They know the Master of the Faithful very well, but egotism and stubbornness stop them from acknowledging the invalidity and treachery of what their predecessors did and condemning the standard-bearers of the Saqīfah as traitors! As is stated:

وَجَحَدُوا بِهَا وَاسْتَيْقَنَتْهَا أَنفُسُهُمْ ظُلْمًا وَعُلُوًّا.

And they denied them, though their souls acknowledged them, for spite and arrogance. (27:14)

They denied Ali's guardianship, even though they were convinced in their hearts that he was right. Out of spite and arrogance they did not acknowledge and yield to the truth.

الَّذِينَ آتَيْنَاهُمُ الْكِتَابَ يَعْرِفُونَهُ كَمَا يَعْرِفُونَ أَبْنَاءَهُمْ.

Those unto whom We gave the Book recognize it as they recognize their sons. (6:20)

Those who have been given the Book know the Master of the Faithful's guardianship, virtues, and feats as they know their own children.

It is amazing to see in many Sunni *hadiths* that Abū Bakr, 'Umar, 'Uthmān, Mu'āwiyah, 'Amr ibn al-'Āṣ, Mughīrah ibn Shu'bah, and Abū 'Ubaydah ibn al-Jarrāḥ knew the Master of the Faithful's virtues and acknowledged his rights, and that they were usurpers. These are confessions recorded by senior Sunnis in their books.

نَسْأَلُ اللهَ تَعالى انْ يَعْصِمَنا مِنَ الزَّلَلِ وَلا يَكِلَنا الى انْفُسِنا طَرْفَةَ عَيْنٍ بِمُحَمَّدٍ وَ آلِهِ الطّاهِرِينَ، وَصَلَواتُهُ وَ تَسْلِيماتُهُ عَلَيْهِمْ اجْمَعِينَ.

We ask the Transcendent God to protect us from slipping and not to leave us on our own for the twinkling of an eye through Mohammad and his pure family, and His blessings and peace be upon them all.

List of Publications of 'Allāmah Sayyid Muhammad Ḥusayn Ḥusayni Ṭihrānī

Kalam (Theology)

(1) *Khodā Shināsī* (*Knowing Allah*), 3 volumes

The main discussions in the series are on the verse الله نور السموات والارض up to والله بكل شيء عليم and some discussions have been published in this field about the Creator's Unity, the attributes and essence of the Names, the quality of creation, the relationship of events to their causes, the manifestation of the Light, guardianship and the connection of creatures to God, and seeing God and reaching His Essence.

Some topics in this series are: *God Can Be Seen; God Loves Whatever Is Other Than God, And Whatever Is Other Than God Loves Him; The Possibility of the Sincere Believers' Seeing God; God Is Everywhere, So Open Your Eyes and See Him; The Deniers of the Vision Of God Are the Worst of People; The Different Ways of Knowing God: Not Seeing Him Is Neither Right Nor Possible; The Logic of the Qur'an Specifies Everything to Be Restricted to God; The Connotation of the Personification in* لا هو إلا هو *Considers Everyone, Apart from the Gnostics, the Same; Those Who Believe in Anything Disconnected with God in Some Way or Another Do Not Believe in Him;* Hashwiyya, Shaykhiyya, *or* Qishriyya *Have No Advantage from God, As Well the Deviations Of Shaykh Ahmad and His Followers.*

(2) *Imam Shināsī* (*Knowing the Imams*), 18 volumes

This is a good collection of commentary discussions, philosophy, *hadiths*, history, and sociology concerning the Imamate and the Guardianship of Ali ibn Abī Ṭālib and the Infallible Imams, consisting of lessons based on reasoning, technically based on the Holy Qur'an and *hadiths* from the Sunnis and Shi'a, with a critical discussion on successorship.

This collection consists of 270 lessons, on topics such as infallibility, the genetics of Guardianship, the necessity of obeying the most learned, the necessity of the infallible living Imam for society, the meaning of guardianship, the mystery and verity of knowledge, the judgments of Ali, the Imam's companionship with the Qur'an in all aspects, Shi'ism and the attributes of the Shi'a, the priority of the Shi'a in all knowledge, published books by the Shi'a, a discussion of *al-Sahifah al-Sajjādiyyah*, the process of knowledge and the history of the Shi'a from the beginning of Islam, the great and everlasting school, the highest level of the school of Imam al-Sādiq, rejecting the basis, opinions, and beliefs of the different Sunni sects, worldly knowledge and the Islamic

knowledge of Imam al-Sādiq, the uprising of Muā'wiyah to overthrow the signs of prophethood and change it to a kingdom, and other topics in detail.

(3) *Ma'ād Shināsī* (*Eschatology*), 10 volumes

This collection includes 75 lessons about the quality and course of man's life in this world, the way he changes and becomes proud in the world of facts, and his death and journey to God. There are discussions on topics such as the present life and the inter-worlds, and how the souls have communication with this world, the quality of the creation of the angels and their duties, how the trumpet is blown and all the dead revive at once, and all gather in the presence of God, the world of Resurrection, accounts, questioning and the Path, intercession, the Height, Paradise and Hell. This is all illustrated by verses of the Qur'an, *hadiths* of the Infallible Imams, reasoning, and philosophy.

Morality, Philosophy and Mysticism

(1) *Risāla-yi Say wa Sulūk; Mansūb bi Baḥr al-'Ulūm (A Thesis on the Spiritual Journey Related to Baḥr al-'Ulūm)*

An explanation of the journey towards God and its signs and effects, together with a detailed explanation of the topics of the thesis, and an introduction by the revered writer on the biography of Allāmah Baḥr al-'Ulūm and his thesis.

This treatise has been translated into English under the title *Treatise on Spiritual Journeying and Wayfaring* by Tawus Raja, edited by Seyyed Hossein Nasr (Great Books of the Islamic World, 2013).

(2) *Risāla-yi Lubb al-Lubāb dar Sayr wa Sulūk-i Ulu'l Albab* (*Treatise on the Kernel of the Kernel* concerning the spiritual journey of the man possessed of mind)

The moral and gnostic prerequisites described by the venerable Allāmah Tabātabā'i concerning the complete manner of how to reach to God; an explanation of the prior condition of sincerity, a brief explanatory discussion on the different ways to journey towards God; the necessary conditions for attaining gnosis and different ways of rejecting past attachments.

This Treatise has been translated into English under the title *Kernel of the Kernel* by Mohammad H. Faghfoory, foreword by Seyyed Hossein Nasr (SUNY Press, 2003).

(3) *Tawhid 'Ilmi wa 'Ayni (Mystical and Scientific Unity)*

The hierarchy and chains of gnosis and injunctions discussed by the great scholars Hājj Sayyid Ahmad Karbalā'i and Hājj Shaykh Muhammad Ḥusayn Isfahani, concerning a couplet from Attar Nishābūri where they interpreted the gnostic and injunction couplet to suit their tastes.

Because these schools require careful reasoning, gnosis, and monotheistic attention, the venerable Allāmah Tabātabā'i, besides teaching in the theological schools in Qum, has written six other books on *Tazyilāt* and *Muḥakamāt* in addition to the first three written by the late Shaykh. He has written eight *Tazyil* in addition to four other written ones. In the final part of the book, he has added an introduction to the characteristics of the four schools and the learned teachers.

(4) Mihr-e Tābān (*The Shining Sun*)

This book is on the reminiscences of Allāmah Ayatulllah Sayyid Mohammad Ḥusayn Tabātabā'i Tabrizi and his discussions with his students. At the beginning of the book, Allāmah Ayatullah has referred to his biography, and then his scientific, philosophical, and gnostic method and that of some of the greatest men. In the second part, there are some of his discussions with Allāmah on the Holy Qur'an, philosophy, gnosis, and moral, scientific, and historical events.

This book has been translated under the title *Shining Sun: In Memory of 'Allamah Tabataba'i* by Tawus Raja (ICAS Press, 2011).

(5) *Rūḥ-e Mujarrad (The Sole Spirit)*

This is about the reminiscence of the great religious gnostic Hājj Sayyid Ḥāshim Musavi Ḥaddād, who was of great prominence and had exemplary ethical values, knowing God and fulfilling His Commands; may the great knowledge of Ayatullah Hājj Sayyid Ali Qāḍi Tabātabā'i Tabrizi benefit the Muslims. In this book it is mentioned how the revered Allāmah was honored to go to the presence of the most revered Ḥaddād, and also his quality of living, his way of studying, the conditions of his religion, the conditions of his students, an explanation of his journey, his careful discussions on Monotheism, the manner of reaching God, the necessity of obeying the master teachers, defending the gnostics and the learned, a rejection of the accusations against Muhyi al-Dīn [al-Arabi], and the meaning of the unity of being are all discussed here.

Qur'anic Commentary

(1) *The New Thesis on the Commentary of the Verse* الرِّجَالُ قَوَّامُونَ عَلَى النِّسَاءِ

Men are in charge (are the protectors and maintainers) of women... (4:34)

This is a collection of commentaries on *hadiths*, jurisprudence, science, social affairs, reasoning, *jihād*, judgment, the status of women, the philosophy of the rights of men and women and the meaning of their equal rights, women and *jihād*, social positions, and a discussion on the guardianship and jurisdiction.

The origin of his thesis is in Arabic, but because of some doubtful but important questions related to women, we have translated it into Farsi.

(2) *The Modern Discussion*

This contains commentaries on *hadiths*, jurisprudence, and historical discussions on the foundations of Islam based on the lunar months and years, referring to verse إِنَّ عِدَّةَ الشُّهُورِ عِندَ اللهِ اثْنَا عَشَرَ شَهْرًا فِي كِتَابِ اللهِ and the sermon of the Prophet at Minā, as well as commentary on the verse نَسِيء

Other discussions include the unlawfulness of altering the lunar months to solar months, the direct interference of outsiders in changing Islamic history through the colonization of the national parliament in three stages, the overthrowing of the Pahlavi Dynasty for their abrogation of the religious history of Mohammad, and the benefits of the lunar year and the harmfulness of the solar.

Discussions on Science and Jurisprudence

(1) *A Theory on the Witnessing of the Crescent Moon*

This is a practical discussion with communications and scientific and jurisprudent letters concerning the necessity for the people to know well the paradigms for witnessing the crescent moon to confirm the lunar months.

(2) *The Muslim's Duty in Vitalizing the Islamic Government*

This contains the opinion of the writer concerning the organization of the Islamic Government, and the prior preparation for it, plus an explanation of the historical events and the writer's activities in the process of the Revolution.

(3) *Guardianship of Jurisdiction in the Islamic Government* **(4 volumes)**

A composition by the Allāmah Ayatullah in 48 lessons concerning the Infallible Imams, the just and qualified jurisprudent, and the people's duties according to verses of the Qur'an and the *hadiths*, and a clear and detailed explanation of jurisprudence, science, history and social events.

(4) *The Spiritual Light of the Qur'an* (4 volumes)
In this collection, the first part deals with the course of Spiritual Light (including the spiritual light of the Qur'an, the mosque, prayer, fasting, and supplications); a discussion on the guidance of the Qur'an as being the best way; the everlasting wholesomeness of the Qur'an; how all commands of the Qur'an are practical at all times; a rejection of the idea of the limitation of birth; an investigation of some misunderstandings about the Qur'an; and the difficulties created by the discourse on "the expansion and contraction of the theories of the religion." Also, discussions on the book of *Knowledge and Values*, the book of *The Creation of Man*, *The Perfection of the Qur'an*, and *The Road Passed By*.

Other topics in this collection are the logic of the Qur'an as based on Monotheism; statements in the Qur'an concerning errors in the Torah and the Bible; commands in the Qur'an about *jihād*, killing, slavery, and ransoms; the penetration of the Qur'anic verses into souls and the world; clearly defined and unambiguous verses; and how to recite the Qur'an when praying and at other times.

Topics also include the effect of the Qur'an on the perfect man; the ethics of the Qur'an; the explanation of the creation of man and the stars in the Qur'an; the verses inviting men to Monotheism and virtue; the miracles of the Qur'an and its having been revealed in Arabic; the necessity for all Muslims to speak Arabic and doing away with ancient Farsi; the greatness and authenticity of the Holy Qur'an; and the effect of the Qur'an in Islamic society.

Topics also include the supremacy of Islamic science over that of Greece, the quality of writing and publishing of the Qur'an, the story of the modern Torah and Bible, the certainty and vastness of the Qur'an, the unchangeability of the Qur'an, and conditions for its publication and compilation.

(5) *An Observation on the Expansion and Contraction of Islamic Theory Based on an Article of Doctor 'Abdul Karim Sorūsh*

In this book the Allāmah Ayatullah explains serious mistakes in the theory, and has answered in the best way concerning the eternal nature of the Qur'an and certain facts about the universe.

This book forms the main part of the second volume of *The Spiritual Light of the Qur'an*, and because of the importance of the subject and the demand of some scholars to make it simple so as to be useful for teachers and students, whereas there is a separate publication for people of knowledge and those who search for the truth.

Topics in the book include the nobility and eternal nature of the Divine religion and the limitation of man's understanding; the greatness and supremacy of Islamic knowledge over modern knowledge; basic teachings of the religious schools that are based on the Qur'an and gnosis; the rejection of the so-called enlightened group of Islamic theory because of alien culture; Allāmah Tabātabā'i's reasoning in support of natural causes as opposed to abstract causes; the logic of the Qur'an as based on proof and reasoning and not illusion.

(6) A booklet on *Marriage: The Decrease of Population as a Great Loss for Muslim Society*

This book is based on a part of the first volume of *Nūr Malakūt al-Qur'an* on marriage in Islam, the importance of begetting children, and the worth of a Muslim. It refers to a translation of the verse ولا يقتلن اولادهن, and because of the importance of the subject, it has been extracted and published separately.

While the book was being published, five years had already passed since the demise of the Great Leader of the Islamic Revolution, and in that length of time many events had taken place to decrease the nation of Iran and destroy the Shi'a. The Ayatullah Allāmah, by referring to the Qur'an, wrote some thirteen appendices to this booklet. He took into consideration the question of controlling the increase of the population within Islamic society, and with clear-sightedness he revealed the deceitful political plan of the oppressors.

Some titles of the appendices are: the dreadful attack and arrogance of the world after the demise of the Great Leader of the Revolution; the failure to refer to the verdicts of the jurisprudents, even to those of the Ayatullah Khomeini, may God be pleased with him; the opinion of the Ayatullah Khāmena'i on the decrease of the population; statistics on the decrease through birth control; the inviolability of birth control and the payment of full blood money instead; opposition to Islamic philosophy and the spirit of belief through the activities of the population.

(7) A letter of critique and the amendment of the draft of the Basic Rules

This is a letter to the Great Leader of the Revolution, may God be pleased with him, containing a critique and the amendment of the draft of the Basic Rules based on Islamic law, and the main plan of the sanctity of the jurisprudent.

Historical Discussions

(1) ***The Glimmers of Ḥusayn***

a booklet of some sayings, preaching, and sermons of the most holy Master of the Martyrs, translated with essential documents from reliable sources

(2) ***The Gift of Ghadīr*****: the two black and white letters**

This book includes a letter from the Emir of Bokhara and the response from the Emir of Khorasan concerning the immediate Guardianship and caliphate of Ali from two centuries ago. By adding an introduction and scrutinization by His Holiness Allāmah, it was prepared for publication.

Biography of the author

The Muslim Shi'a Scholar and Thinker

'Allāmah Hājj Sayyid Muhammad Ḥusayn Ḥusaynī Ṭihrānī

From the introduction to Kernel of the Kernels

According to available biographical information, 'Allāmah Ṭihrānī was born in Tehran, Iran, in 1345 A.H./1925 (1303 S.H.) and passed away in Mashhad, Iran, in 1416 A.H./1995 (1374 S.H.).

Family

His grandfather, Ayatullah Hājj Sayyid Ibrāhīm, had studied in Najaf with Ayatullah Mīrzā Hasan Shīrāzī (d. 1312/1894, a scholar known as *mīrzā-yi awwal*). The 'Allāmah's father, Ayatullah Sayyid Muhammad Ṣādiq, was a student of Mīrzā Muhammad Taqī Shīrāzī (d. 1339/1920, known as *mīrzā-yi duwwum*). After completing his education in Samarra, Muhammad Ṣādiq returned to Iran and settled in Tehran. Little is written about Muhammad Ṣādiq's life and career during the reign of Riḍā Shah (1925–1941). There is much evidence, however, that points to his active involvement in open oppositional activity against Riḍā Shah's government. Several observers, including 'Allāmah Ṭihrānī himself, testify that like many other members of the clergy, Ayotullah Muhammad Ṣādiq strongly opposed secularization and westernization of Iran. He was particularly active in organizing and leading the government's opponents in Tehran against the law for uniformity of dress introduced in December, 1921 (1307 S.H.), and the law for the abolition of women's veils promulgated in 1935 (1314 S.H.). As a result of these activities, Muhammad Ṣādiq was arrested and imprisoned several times. Despite the government's attempt to discredit him, he survived and remained one of the most senior and respected *mujtahids* of Tehran in the early and middle decades of the twentieth century.[200]

Ayatullah 'Allāmah Ṭihrānī is related to many prominent Shi'a Iranian scholars of previous centuries by birth and/or marriage, including such notable scholars as Muhammad Bāqir Majlisī, Ayatullah Mīrzā Muhammad Ṭihrānī, the author of *Mustadrak al-Biḥār*, Muhammad Ṣāliḥ Khatunābādi, and Sayyid Mahdī Baḥr al-'Ulūm.

Education

Unlike his father, the young Muhammad Ḥusayn did not receive his early religious education in the theological schools of Qum or Tehran. He studied with his father at home until he became well versed in the Islamic sciences. He also received a modern education during the 1930's and 1940's in Tehran. After completing elementary school and three years of secondary school he entered the German Technical School in

Tehran, and in 1942, graduated with a degree in mechanical engineering.

It was only then in 1943 (1364 A.H./1322 S.H.) that Muhammad Ḥusayn entered the Ḥawzah 'Ilmiyyah of Qum and joined 'Allāmah Ṭabāṭabā'ī's circle of students.[201] For the next seven years, the young Muhammad Husayn studied in Qum, receiving instruction from Shaykh Murtaḍā Ḥā'irī Yazdī and Sayyid Muhammad Dāmād in addition to 'Allāmah Ṭabāṭaba'ī. After seven years of studying with the 'Allāmah, Ṭihrānī reached the rank of *mujtahid* and decided to go to Najaf to continue his education.

Ṭihrānī stayed in Najaf for seven years, during which time he studied with Ayatullahs Āqā Buzurg Ṭihrānī, Sayyid Maḥmūd Shāhrūdī Sayyid Abū al-Qāsim Khū'ī, Shaykh Ḥusayn Ḥillī, and several other scholars.[202]

The Scholars

Several scholars and mystics played important roles in 'Allāmah Ṭihrānī's spiritual life. As Ṭihrānī himself has stated, his first teacher and spiritual guide was 'Allāmah Ṭabāṭabā'ī, who initiated Ṭihrānī into mysticism (*'irfān*), took him under his spiritual guidance, and closely supervised his wayfaring and spiritual advancement while he was studying in Qum. Until the end of his life, Ṭihrānī constantly admired Ṭabāṭabā'ī and acknowledged his role in his intellectual and spiritual achievements. Thus, when Ṭihrānī left Qum for Najaf, he had already started wayfaring and pursuing an active spiritual life.

During the years in Najaf, as 'Allāmah Ṭabāṭabā'ī had instructed him, Ṭihrānī was to seek guidance in spiritual matters only from Ayatullah 'Abbās Qūchānī and whomever he deemed appropriate. Ayatullah Qūchānī taught Ṭihrānī further details and theoretical principles of the doctrine.

In 1957 (1376 A.H./1336 S.H.) Ṭihrānī met the most eminent spiritual master in Karbala, namely, Hājj Sayyid Hāshim Ḥaddād (d. 1984), an incident that changed Ṭihrānī's soul and destiny.

'Allāmah Ṭihrānī states that he had heard Hājj Sayyid Hāshim Ḥaddād's name from 'Allāmah Ṭabāṭabā'ī, who always spoke of him with respect and admiration. When he went to Najaf and visited Ayatullah Shaykh 'Abbās Qūchānī, Ṭihrānī inquired about Hājj Sayyid Hāshim Ḥaddād and found out that he lived in Karbala. A mysterious yearning to meet Sayyid Hāshim finally led Ṭihrānī to make a pilgrimage to Karbala. In that same year he met the great master. The young Ṭihrānī's soul was totally captured by the spiritual eminence and charisma of Sayyid Hāshim Ḥaddād.

Ṭihrānī's acquaintance with Sayyid Hāshim Ḥaddād had a profound impact on his scholarly and spiritual life. From his first meeting with Ḥaddād, the young Ṭihrānī's soul was greatly transformed. In Ḥaddād, Ṭihrānī found a sincere Muslim, and a great spiritual master and guide who had passed from the realm of multiplicity and was so completely annihilated in Divine Unity (*tawḥīd*) that words cannot describe his station and his personality. He was beyond description and comprehension. He was one of the most powerful figures in spiritual journeying who had passed beyond the realm of angels (*malakūt*), had reached the realm of Divine Names (*lāhūt*) and Divine Invincibility (*jabarūt*) and had been totally annihilated in the Divine Essence.[203]

One can hardly exaggerate the impact that Ḥaddād had on Ṭihrānī's spiritual life. In *Rūḥ-i Mujarrad*, Ṭihrānī describes in detail Ḥaddād's spiritual station and the way he trained his disciples in spiritual matters. Suffice it to say that after becoming acquainted with Ḥaddād and until the master's death, Ṭihrānī made considerable advancement on the path, to such an extent that Ḥaddād honored Ṭihrānī by granting him the title of Sayyid al-Ṭā'ifatayn (master of two peoples, i.e. scholars and mystics).

After seven years studying in Najaf and benefiting from Sayyid Hāshim Ḥaddād's presence and instructions, the master advised him to return to Tehran. Despite his own wishes, Ṭihrānī reluctantly did so and began his career as a teacher, leader of congregational prayer, and orator in the Qā'im Mosque in Tehran. In the meantime, pursuant to Ḥaddad's recommendation, Ṭihrānī received spiritual guidance from Shaykh Muhammad Jawād Anṣārī, another prominent master who lived in the city of Hamadān in western Iran.

For the next twenty-two years, Ṭihrānī visited Najaf and other shrine cities in Iraq regularly and greatly benefited from his association with Hājj Sayyid Hāshim Ḥaddād.

Works

At the same time, he devoted most of his time and effort to preaching and spreading the principles of traditional Islam as well as teaching and training students who came to him from different parts of the country. In his public sermons, which were very popular, Ṭihrānī dealt with purely religious issues as well as socio-political ones. Some of these speeches were published later in Tehran or Mashhad. Sayyid Muhammad Ḥusayn Ḥusaynī Tihrānī was a traditional scholar in the true sense of the word, and highly respected in scholarly and religious circles in Tehran, Qum, and Mashhad. Like his teacher and mentor,

'Allāmah Ṭabāṭabā'ī, Ṭihrānī can be considered a student of the school of Muḥyī al-Dīn ibn 'Arabī, while at the same time being greatly influenced and inspired by the ideas and writings of Ṣadr al-Dīn Shirḥī (Mullā Ṣadrā). He admired and respected Iranian philosophers of previous centuries, particularly such thinkers as Abu Rayḥān Bīrūnī, Ibn Sīnā, Naṣīr al-Dīn Ṭūsī and Mullā Muḥsin Fayḍ Kāshānī.

Frequently in his writings, Ṭihrānī referred to these thinkers and philosophers. In addition, he used verses from the Qur'an extensively.

Like 'Allāmah Ṭabāṭabā'ī he uses the same technique of commenting on and interpreting each verse with the help of other verses. As Ṭihrānī states, this approach is based on certain prophetic *hadiths* and narrations (*riwāyāt*) from the Shi'a Imams as well as on *Nahj al-Balāghah* of Imam Ali Ibn Abī Ṭālib: "Verily, some verses of the Qur'an interpret and comment on others." "God's Book is the one by which you can see the Truth, say the Truth, and hear the Truth. Some of its verses interpret other verses, some are an attestation for and reason for others. The Qur'an contains no contradictions in the affairs of God and does not separate from God whoever adheres to its injunctions."

Another feature of Ṭihrānī's writings is how he deals with social, political, historical, moral, and philosophical issues, in addition to purely religious and metaphysical ones. In his writings, he addresses many questions facing contemporary Muslim society and provides appropriate Islamic solutions.

Like 'Allāmah Ṭabāṭabā'ī, Ayatullah Ṭihrānī devoted his life to scholarship as well as spiritual journeying and wayfaring. He wrote on metaphysics and a variety of Islamic subjects and expanded greatly our scope of understanding on the relationship between Shi'ism and Sufism. His writings are characterized by their lucidity, originality, and depth, and are indicative of his mastery of the Qur'an, Shi'ism, Sufism, and Persian and Arabic literature. His spiritual orientation and his esoteric ideas were particularly influenced by teachings and instructions given to him by Hāshim Ḥaddād as well as 'Allāmah Ṭabāṭabā'ī and Muhammad Jawād Anṣārī. Like them, he admired Muḥyī al-Dīn ibn al-'Arabī, Shaykh Maḥmūd Shabastārī, Mawlānā Jalāl al-Dīn Rūmī, Ḥāfiz, and Ibn al-Fāriḍ. His devotion to these Sufi poets and thinkers is well reflected in his writings where he frequently presents relevant examples from their works. However, he was more outspoken than his teachers in criticizing the opponents of Sufism.

Ayatullah Ḥusaynī Ṭihrānī was a teacher, eloquent speaker, and prolific writer. He wrote, edited, and translated numerous works on different aspects of Islam, Shi'ism, Sufism, eschatology, and other

related subjects. Like his teacher, Ṭihrānī, by his contributions to Islamic studies and mysticism, earned the honorable title of 'Allāmah within his lifetime. Not only do these writings reflect the depth of his knowledge and mastery of philosophy, jurisprudence, theosophy, Shi'ism, and the Holy Qur'an, they are also indicative of the purity of his heart, faith, sincerity, and genuine yearning for knowledge and truth.

Another Aspect

Another aspect of 'Allāmah Ṭihrānī's life that has not been examined to this day is his interest in politics and his participation in political activity during the two decades that preceded the Islamic Revolution of 1979. The nature and details of Ṭihrānī's political activities before, during, and after the Islamic Revolution are important issues that cannot be dealt with here and must be studied separately. The available information suggests that despite his preoccupation with preaching, teaching, and writing, Ṭihrānī had turned his mosque into an active center of opposition against the Shah's government before the revolution; and a center for mass mobilization and political education after the establishment of the Islamic Republic. In one of his publications, Ṭihrānī reports how he organized certain members of the clergy into small groups and defied the Shah's government and its reforms in the early 1960's, how he urged Ayatullah Ruḥullāh Khomeini to issue declarations against the government and formed networks for their distribution, and how he met or communicated with Ayatullah Khomeini and advised him on taking positions on various occasions. Of particular interest is Ṭihrānī's discussion of the events of 15 Khordād, 1342/5, June, 1963 and his activities in support of Khomeini. When Khomeini was arrested by government forces and the rumors of his upcoming execution spread, Ṭihrānī maintains that he met many prominent scholars of Qum and wrote to others in cities throughout Iran asking them to declare that Khomeini was an Ayatullah and one of the country's religious references (*marāji' al-taqlīd*), and so his execution was not permissible according to the Constitution of 1905. As a result, instead of execution, Ayatullah Khomeini was exiled first to Turkey and then to Iraq. After the victory of the Revolution, Ṭihrānī states, he met with Ayatullah Khomeini several times and presented the outline of a twenty-point program for consolidation of the new regime, including the establishment of a new military force and suggestions to modify the new constitution.

Despite his interest in politics, before the revolution, Ṭihrānī concentrated most of his time and energy on an extensive cultural

campaign for the purification of Islam and Shi'ism from beliefs and practices he considered to be corrupt and non-Islamic. Concomitantly, he devoted himself to teaching, studying, and practicing *'irfan* in a serious but quiet manner. We know that in the late 1960's and the 1970's, when 'Allāmah Ṭabāṭabā'ī held a class for a select group of his students in Tehran, the young Ṭihrānī, along with the late Ayatullah Murtaḍā Muṭahharī and Professors Henry Corbin and Seyyed Hossein Nasr, attended those sessions and benefited from 'Allāmah's knowledge and presence. During those sessions, important religious and intellectual questions on Islam in general, and Shi'ism and Sufism in particular, were discussed, and Professor Nasr acted as the main translator and interpreter.[204] After the Islamic Revolution of 1979 and the establishment of the Islamic Republic, Ṭihrānī settled in Mashhad where he devoted his time to teaching, writing, and spiritual wayfaring. Many more students and budding mystics gathered around Ṭihrānī, benefited from his scholarship, and received spiritual guidance from him until he passed away on 9 Safar 1416 A.H.

As mentioned before, 'Allāmah Ṭihrānī was initiated into the Divine mysteries while he was still fairly young. In *Lubb al-Lubāb*, 'Allāmah Ṭabāṭabā'ī discusses the doctrine and the method of the *ṭarīqah* (order) they both followed. In this order equal emphasis is placed on exoteric and esoteric aspects of Islam as well as on love and devotion to the Blessed Prophet's Household (peace and blessing be upon them).

In *Lubb al-Lubāb*, Ṭabāṭabā'ī details these ideas and goes so far as to say that the station of the Universal Man (*al-insān al-kāmil*) can be fully attained only by the Imam, the status of the Imam in Shi'ism being identical to that of the Spiritual Pole (*quṭb*) in Sufism, whose existence in the world is always necessary and indispensable.

'Allāmah Ṭihrānī was a man of great piety and noble character. His presence is still strongly felt in the intellectual and spiritual circles in Mashhad several years after his departure from this world. Three years before his death in 1995, and with the support of his students and disciples, the 'Allāmah established in Mashhad the Foundation for the Translation and Publication of the Collection on Islamic Sciences and Culture (*Mu'assasayi Tarjumah wa Nashr-i Dawra-yi 'Ulūm wa Ma'ārif-i Islāmi*). He appointed some of his trusted students to manage and supervise the publication of his writings and the translation of some of those works into other languages. Most of the 'Allāmah's writings had been published by Ḥikmat Publication Company within his lifetime. When he passed away, the Foundation took over this arduous task. To this date, the Foundation has published most of his writings in Persian.

Many of his works have also been translated into Arabic and published by Dār al-Maḥajjat al-Bayḍā' in Beirut, Lebanon. *Lubb al-Lubāb* was the first in the series to be translated in its entirety into English.

Synopses of Some of His Books

Allah Shināsī is a collection of speeches that the Ayatullah gave in Mashhad. It starts with a commentary on verses thirty-five to sixty-four of chapter twenty-four of the Qur'an (Sūrat al-Nūr). In this collection, he discusses some of the most profound metaphysical issues, such as the Unity (*tawḥīd*) of the Divine Names, Attributes, and Essence, the descent of Divine Light in the manifestations of existence (*wujūd*), the reality of *walāyah*, the question of unity with the Divine, the meaning of *lā huwa illā huwa* (there is no he but He), and other related issues.

Imam Shināsī is an encyclopedic work in eighteen volumes based on the Qur'an and the *hadith* that addresses the question of the Imamate from historical, social, philosophical, and esoteric points of view, and the imamate of Imam Ali ibn Abī Ṭālib in particular. Important and often controversial issues such as the necessity of the presence of an infallible and living Imam, prophetic traditions concerning the question of *walāyah*, the Ghadīr Khumm incident and the Prophet's Farewell Pilgrimage (*ḥajjat al-widā*), the development of Shi'a sciences and the role of Imam Ṣādiq (peace be upon him), and other issues of similar nature are discussed in this collection.

Ma'ād Shināsī is another comprehensive work in ten volumes dealing with eschatology from the point of view of the Shi'a in this collection, 'Allāmah Ṭihrānī deals with such issues as the intermediate world (*'ālam al-barzakh*), the creation of angels and their duties, life after death, and finally, resurrection and the Day of Judgment. Like his other works, this collection is also predominantly based on the Holy Qur'an, *hadith*, and *riwāyāt* from the Shi'a Imams.

Other important books written by Ayatullah Ḥusaynī Ṭihrānī that have been published by the Foundation include the following:

1. *Hadiyyah Ghadīriyyah* (*The Ghadīriyyah Present*)
2. *Lum'āt al-Ḥusayn* (*Divine Flashes of [Imam] Ḥusayn*)
3. *Lubb al-Lubāb dar Sayr wa Sulūk-i Ulū al-Albāb* (*Kernel of the Kernel Concerning the Wayfaring and Spiritual Journey of the People of Intellect*)
4. *Mihr-i Tābān* (*Shining Sun: A Biography of 'Allāmah Ṭabāṭabā'ī*)
5. *Nami-yi Pish Niwis-i Qānūn-i Asāsī* (*Introduction to the First Draft of the Constitution [of Iran]*)
6. *Nigarishi bar Maqāla-yi Basṭ wa Qabḍ-i Turik-i Sharī'at* (*An Examination of the Essay by Dr. 'Abdulkarim Surush on the Theoretical Expansion and Contraction in the Sharia*)

7. *Nūr Malakūt al-Qur'an* (*The Angelic Light of the Qur'an*) (in 4 volumes)
8. *Risālah-yi Badī'ah* (*The Original Treatise*)
9. *Risālah Ḥawl-i Mas'ala-yi Ru'yat-i Hilāl* (*Treatise on Seeing the Moon*)
10. *Risālah-yi Nikāḥiyyah* (*Treatise on Marriage*)
11. *Risālah-yi Nuwin* (*The New Treatise*)
12. *Risālah-yi Sayr wa Sulūk* (*Treatise on Wayfaring and Spiritual Journey Attributed to Sayyid Mahdī Baḥr al-'Ulūm* [edited with an introduction and comments]
13. *Rūḥ-i Mujarrad* (*The Detached Spirit*)
14. *Tawhid-i 'Ilmi wa 'Ayni* (*Unity of Knowledge and Essence*)
15. *Walāyat-i Faqīh dar Ḥukūmat-i Islam* (*The Guardianship of the Jurist in the Islamic Government*)
16. *Waẓīfa-yi Fard-i Musalmān dar Iḥyā'-i Ḥukūmat-i Islām* (*The Duty of Individual Muslims in Reviving Islamic Government*)

Sections of *Lubb al-Lubāb*, as well as selected parts of *Rūḥ-i Mujarrad*, were previously rendered into English by Mr. Ali Quli Qarai and appeared in *Tawḥīd*, a quarterly journal that was once published in the city of Qum, though its publication has ceased for some time....[205]

ENDNOTES

[1] There is a *hadith* to support this interpretation narrated via an unbroken chain of transmission through al-Mujāhid in *Shawāhid al-Tanzil* by Ubaydullah ibn Ahmad Kasāei, (Qum: Majma' Ihyā' Thiqafat al-Islamiyyah, n.p., 1411 A.H.), vol. 1, 149: *O you who believe* means those who have accepted Monotheism; *obey God* means regarding duties to Him; *obey the Prophet* means regarding his tradition; *and those among you in authority* was revealed about the Master of the Faithful when God's Messenger appointed him as deputy in Medina.

[2] There is a *hadith* in *al-Mizān fi Tafsir al-Qur'an* by Muhammad Hussein Ṭabāṭabā'i, (Qum: Islamiyyah, 1386 HS), vol. 4, p. 437, that supports this claim: "It is related in al-Ayyāshī's exegesis from 'Abdullāh ibn 'Ajlān and Abū Ja'far regarding *Obey God, and obey the Messenger and those of you who are in authority*. It is about Ali and the Imams. God put them in the Prophets' places except that they do not make anything lawful or unlawful."

[3] *Al-Mizān*, vol. 4, p. 437 and *al-Kāfi* narrate via a chain of transmission on the authority of Burayd ibn Mu'āwiyah: "Abu Ja'far recited: '*Obey God, and obey the Messenger and those among you who are in authority*. Then if you fear dispute over anything, refer it to God, to the Messenger and to those of you who are in authority.' He said: 'How can He enjoin obedience to them and allow dispute with them? He only said that to those given the command—to whom was said *Obey God and obey the Messenger*.'" Al-Ayyāshī's exegesis relates from Burayc ibn Mu'āwiyah, on the authority of Abū Ja'far, the above *hadith* as per *al-Kāfi*. The *hadith* then says: "He then said to the people, comprising all the believers up to the Day of Resurrection: *Obey God and obey the Prophet and those among you who are in authority*, meaning us exclusively. Then if you fear dispute over anything, refer to God, to the Messenger and to those of you who are in authority. That is how it was revealed. How can He enjoin obedience to those...in authority and allow them to dispute with them? That was only said to those commanded—to whom it was said: *Obey God, and obey the Messenger and those of you who are in authority*."

[4] Here, the term إنّي is an Arabic expression meaning tracing the cause via the effect (*al-burhān al-innī*).

[5] Hāshim Musawi Baḥrāni, *al-Būrhān fi Tafsir al-Qur'ān*, (n.p., n.d.), vol. 1, p. 235; Hāshim Musawi Baḥrāni, *Ghāyat al-Marām* (Lithography, n.p., n.d), pp. 265, 266, chapter 59 *hadith* 3; Ṭabāṭabā'ī, *al-Mizān*, vol. 4, p. 437, Cf. 'Ayyāshī's exegesis; *Shawāhid al-Tanzil*, vol. 1, 149 up to the Prophet's words *fa a'ṭāni dhālik* (He has granted me that).

[6] *al-Būrhān*, vol.1, p. 238; *Ghāyat al-Marām*, pp. 263–264, chapter 58, *hadith* 1; *al-Mizān*, vol.4, p. 439, Cf. *al-Burhān*; *Shawāhid al-Tanzil*, vol. 1, p. 149.

[7] *al-Burhān*, vol.1, p. 238; *Ghāyat al-Marām*, p. 264, chapter 58, *hadith* 2; *al-Mizān*, vol. 4, p. 439, Cf. *al-Burhān*.

[8] *al-Burhān*, vol. 1, p. 236; *Ghāyat al-Marām*, p. 267, chapter 59, *hadith* 8.

[9] *al-Mizān*, vol. 4, p. 39.

[10] *al-Būrhān*, vol.1, pp. 234, 235; *Ghāyat al-Marām*, p. 267 on the authority of Ṣadūq, and, Ṭabāṭabā'ī, *al-Mizān* vol. 4, pp. 435, 436 on the authority of *al-Burhān* all cite this *hadith*. We have cited it verbatim at the beginning of volume 3 of this book.

[11] *al-Burhān*, vol. 1,p. 235; *Ghāyat al-Marām*, p. 267, chapter 59, *hadith* 11; *al-Mīzān*, vol. 4, pp. 436, 437 up to the end of the *hadith* 1.

[12] *Shawāhid al-Tanzīl*, vol. 1, p. 148.

[13] *al-Mizān*, vol. 4, p. 436.

[14] Shaykh 'Abbās Qumi, *Muntahā al-Āmāl*, (Intishārāt Hijrat, n.d.), vol. 1, p. 92.

[15] *Nahj al-Balāghah* (Egypt: Maṭba'at al-Isā), p. 304, sermons.

[16] *Nahj al-Balāghah*, pp. 271–272, sermons.

[17] *Nahj al-Balāghah*, p.119, letters.

[18] Ṭabāṭabā'i, *al-Mīzān*, vol. 4, p. 514.

[19] Jalāl al-Dīn Suyūṭi, (n.p., Dār al-Ma'rifa, 1404 A.H.), *al-Dūrr al-Manthūr*, vol. 2, p. 177; it is also narrated from Imrān ibn Ḥuṣayn: "I heard God's Messenger say: 'There is no obedience through disobedience to God.'" Shaykh Ḥurr al-Āmilī, *Wasā'il al-Shī'a* (n.p., al-Maktabat al-Islamiyyah, 1388 SH), vol. 11, p. 422.

[20] Muhammad ibn Ismā'il Bukhāri, *Saḥīḥ Būkhārī*, (n.p., Maṭba't al-'Uthmāni, n.d.), vol. 9, p. 79, *The Book of Laws*, Part 4.

[21] Muhammad ibn Ṭalḥi Shāfi'i, *Maṭālib al-Su'ūl*, (n.p. manuscript, n.d.), p. 21; Abu Na'im Ibrāhim Isfahani, *Ḥilyat al Awliyā'*, (n.p., Maṭba'at al-Sa'ada, vol. 1351 A.H.), vol. 1, 64; Sulaymān ibn Ibrārim Qundūzi Ḥanafi, *Yanābī' al-Mawaddah*, (n.p., Ṭab' al-Islamul, 1301 A.H.), p. 212 say that Ibn 'Abbās said: "There is not a single *O you who believe* verse in the Qur'an of which Ali is not the chief and master!"

[22] *Ghāyat al-Marām*, p. 26.

[23] *Sharḥ Nahj al-Balāghah*, vol. 1, p. 16.

[24] Ali forgave 'Ā'ishah. Even though she hated him, he forgave her. *Nahj al-Balāghah* says: "Ā'ishah had her own weakness, as is the nature of most women." He also forgave Marwān ibn al-Ḥakam even though he was aware of his spite towards him. *Nahj al-Balāghah*, vol.1, p. 123.

[25] *Sharḥ Nahj al-Balāghah*, ed. Ibn Abī al-Ḥadid (n.p., Dār al-Turāth al-Arabiyya, 1378), vol. 1, pp. 16–17.

[26] Mahmoud ibn 'Umar Zamakhsharī, *Tafsīr al-Kashshāf* (Beirut: Maṭba'at Dār al-Kutub al-Arabi, n.d.), vol. 1, p. 525.

[27] *al-Durr al-Manthūr*, vol. 2, p. 176.

[28] Ibid.

[29] Shaykh 'Abbās Qumi, *Tatimmat al-Muntahā*, (n.p., 1397 A.H.), p. 153; Ahmad ibn Abī Ya'qūb, *Tārikh Ya'qūbi* (Beirut: Dār al-Ṣādir, 1397 A.H.), vol. 2, p. 109; *Majālis al-Mufid*, p. 101; Muhammad Bāqir al-Majlisī, *Biḥār al-Anwār* (Tehran: Dār al-Kutub al-Islamiyyah, 1376 HS), vol. 17, p. 39; *Tuḥaf al-'Uqūl*, p. 42; *Biḥār*

al-Anwār, vol. 15, part 2, p. 85, *cf.* Ṣadūq, *Ikmāl al-Dīn; Fī Zilāl al-Qur'ān* (Beirut: Dār Iḥyā' al-Turāth al-'Arabī), p. 125, Section One, related from Imam Ahmad Ḥanbal.

[30] *al-Imāmah wa al-Siyāsah*, vol. 1, p. 13.

[31] *Tārīkh Abū al-Fidā'*, vol.1, p. 158; *Tārīkh al-Khamīs*, vol. 2, p. 233.

[32] Ibn Qutaybah Dinwari, *al-Imāmah wa al-Siyāsah* (Egypt: Muṣaffa al-Bābi al-Ḥalabi, 1312) vol. 1, p. 17.

[33] *al-Imāmah wa al-Siyāsah*, vol. 1, p, 14.

[34] *Nahj al-Balāghah* (Fayḍ al-Islam), p. 47.

[35] Musā Sibṭ, *Shī'a dar Islām*, vol. 2, p. 103.

[36] Abdul Hussein Amīnī, *al-Ghadīr*, vol.5, p. 270, says that there are different accounts of the words 'Umar used.

[37] Muhammad ibn Jarir Ṭabari, *Tārīkh al-Ṭabari*, vol. 2, p. 446; Fakhr Rāzi in *Nihāyah al-'Uqūl* and Abū Ubaydah Qasim ibn Salām; Balādhurī in *Ansāb al-Ashrāf*; Sam'ānī in *Faḍā'il*; Muḥibb al-Dīn Ṭabarī in *al-Riyāḍ al-Naḍirah* (Egypt: Maktabat al-Jandi, 1391 AH); and Hussein ibn Muhammad ibn al-Hasan al-Bakri in *Tārīkh Khamīs* confirm this *hadith*. Juzrī cites it in *Kāmil* with this additional phrase: قد ولیت علیکم ولست بخیرکم "I was put in charge of you but I am not the best of you."

[38] *Sīrah ibn Hishām*, vol. 4, p. 1073; *Ghāyat al-Marām*, p. 549, *hadith* 15, on the authority of Muhammad ibn Ali al-Ḥakīm al-Tirmidhī, who is of the greatest of Sunni scholars: Abū Bakr said: "Dismiss me because Ali is worthier of this mandate than I." Another narration says that al-Ṣiddīq [sic] would repeat three times: "Dismiss me, because I am not the best among you while Ali is among you!"

[39] *Ansāb al-Ashrāf*, 'Abdullāh ibn Ṣabā', (Egypt: n.d.), p, 92; *Ghāyat al-Marām*, pp. 560, 561, cites eight Sunni *hadiths* and twenty-three Shi'a *hadiths* pertaining to 'Umar's words, "Surely the pledge of allegiance to Abu Bakr was a blunder."

[40] *al-Ghadīr*, vol. 2, p. 152.

[41] *al-Ghadīr*, vol. 7, p. 158; *cf. Tarikh Abi al-Fidā'*.

[42] Qāḍi Nūr Allah Shūshtari, *Majālis al-Mu'minīn* (Tehran: Aliquli Khān, 1299A.H.), p. 114.

[43] Shaykh Abbā Qumi, *Safinah al-Biḥār* (Najaf: Maṭba'at 'Ilmiyyah, 1355 A.H.), vol. 2, p. 551.

[44] 'Umar and Abū Bakr's conversation with Mālik, and the Prophet's words to them, are not in *Safinah al-Biḥār*, but are in *Majālis al-Mu'minīn*. That is why blessed Muḥaddith Qummī says "end of abridgement" after giving the account of what happened to Mālik.

[45] Allamah Sayyed Murtaḍā Askari, *Abdullāh ibn Ṣabā'* (Egypt: n.p., 1381), p. 104, citing al-Iṣābah.

[46] Būṭāḥ is a stretch of water in Asad ibn Khuzaymah's territory.

[47] *Tārīkh al-Ṭabari*, vol. 2, p. 503.

[48] *al-Ghadīr*, vol. 7, p. 158.

[49] *Tārīkh al-Ṭabarī*, vol. 2, p. 503.

[50] *Tārīkh Abi al-Fidā*, p. 158.

[51] *Tārīkh al-Ṭabari*, vol. 2, p. 503; *Tārīkh al-Ya'qūbi*, vol. 2, p. 132.

[52] *Tārīkh Abī al-Fidā*, p. 158.
[53] Ibid, p. 158.
[54] Ibid.
[55] *Tārīkh Abī al-Fidā'* says, "Ḍirār killed (*qatala Ḍirār*)," but it should be, "He killed him, his showing forbearance," (*qatalahu ṣabran*) based on what Amīnī says, *al-Ghadīr*, vol. 7, p. 165, citing *al-Iṣābah*, vol. 3, p. 357 and *Mir'āt-al-Janān*, vol. 1, p. 62.
[56] *Tārīkh al-Ya'qūbī*, vol. 2, p. 132.
[57] *Tārīkh al-Ṭabarī*, vol. 2, p. 503.
[58] *Tārīkh al-Ṭabarī*, vol. 2, 504.
[59] *Tārīkh Abī al-Fidā'*, vol. 1, 158.
[60] *Tārīkh al-Khamīs*, vol. 2, p. 233.
[61] *Tārīkh al-Ṭabarī*, vol. 2, p. 503.
[62] Ibid. There is a similar quote in Farid Wajdi's *Encyclopedia*.
[63] *Tārīkh al-Ṭabarī*, vol. 2, p. 502.
[64] *al-Ghadīr*, vol. 7, p. 160; *cf. Tarīkh ibn Shaḥnah*, published as footnotes to *al-Kāmil*, vol. 7, p.165.
[65] *al-Imāmah wa al-Siyāsah*, vol. 1, p. 16; a different wording of Abū Bakr's sermon is cited in volume 1 of this book.
[66] *al-Ghadīr*, vol. 7, p. 118 citing *Musnad Ahmad*, vol. 1, p. 11.
[67] Mad ibn Ḥanbal Shaybāni, *Musnad Ahmad* (Beirut: Dār al-Maktab al-Islamiyyah, n.d.), vol. 1, p. 11; Ahmad ibn M. Ṭabari, *al-Riyāḍ al-Naḍirah*, (Egypt: al-Labanda, n.d.), vol.1, p. 177.
[68] *Abdullāh Ibn Ṣabā'*, p. 18, quoting Ibn 'Abd Rabbih and Abū al-Fidā'.
[69] *Nahj al-Balāghah*, (Fayḍ al-Islām), p. 46, Khutbah al-Shiqshiqiyyah.
[70] Abdul Mālik ibn Hishām al-Ḥamiri, *al-Sirat al-Nabawiyyah* (*al-Sirat Ibn Hishām*), (Egypt: Dār al-Turāth al-Arabi, n.d.), p. 289; Abul Faraj al-Shāfi'i, *al-Sirat al-Ḥalabiyyah*, (Egypt: al-Azhar, 1351 A.H.), vol. 2, p. 3.
[71] *Sharḥ al-Qāmūs* says: "*Barash* or *burshah* mean tiny specks in the hair of a horse that are different from the rest of its color; the Persian [word] for it is *chāpār*. Such a horse is called *abrash* or *barīsh*. *Barash* is a whiteness that appears on the nails. Therefore, an eye that is *barash* means an eye with flecks in it, or dark blue eyes."
[72] Dehkhodā's dictionary says that a *qarūrah* is a small round bottle in which urine is kept. Concerning this, Mathnawi Mawlawi says:

"Surely that flask in which there is no light is a urine specimen jar (*qārūrah*); call it not a lantern!" Thus, because in ancient times they kept urine in such bottles for the purpose of treatment, this kind of jar is named after it. It is explained in 'Aṭṭar's *Tadhkirah al-Awliyā'* that "The caliph had a Christian physician who was very expert in his job. The caliph sent him to treat Sufyān, but when he saw his urine specimen jar, he said: 'Fear of God has melted this man's liver and it will come out of his bladder piece by piece.'"

[73] "Nymphs" refers to the young of the locusts that are ready to fly, or have just grown wings, but here it means the crowd of people mixing together, busy in making mischief.

[74] *Murūj al-Dhahab* (Egypt: Maṭba'ah Sa'ādah, 1367 A.H.), vol. 3, pp. 41–45, mentioning the days of Mu'āwiyah ibn Abī Sufyān.
[75] *Uṣūl al-Kāfi* (Tehran: Maktabat al-Ṣadūq, 1381 A.H.), vol. 1, p. 198.
[76] *al-Mizān*, vol. 4, p. 418.
[77] Concerning the behavior of 'Ā'ishah at the Battle of the Camel, *Nahj al-Balāghah* (Fayḍ al-Islam), p. 487.
[78] *al-Ghadīr*, vol. 7, p. 142.
[79] Ibid., pp. 143–144.
[80] Ibid., p. 139.
[81] Ibid., pp. 136–137.
[82] This narration is mentioned in *al-Durr al-Manthūr*, vol. 2, p. 178.
[83] This statement is a lie falsely attributed to God. Never has God appointed such oppressive caliphs to govern the people, nor has He enjoined people to obey them.
[84] *al-Ghadīr*, vol. 7, p. 138, and this narration is explained in *al-Dūrr al-Manthūr*, vol. 2, p. 177.
[85] Ibid.
[86] *al-Durr al-Manthūr*, vol. 2, 177.
[87] The Master of the Faithful delivered a lengthy sermon exposing the lies they falsely attributed to the Prophet. *Nahj al-Balāghah*, vol.1, p. 423.
[88] Aḥmad Amīn says in his book *Fajr al-Islām* the same as what 'Allāmah Ṭabāṭabā'ī says in his exegesis *al-Mīzān*, vol. 4, p. 422.
[89] *Nahj al-Balāghah*, vol. 1, p. 271.
[90] Ibid.
[91] *Nahj al-Balāghah*, vol. 1, p. 437.
[92] *al-Imāmah wa al-Siyāsah*, vol. 1, p. 12.
[93] Ahmad ibn Ḥanbal quotes Zayd ibn Thābit's *hadith* in section 5 of his *Musnad*, narrating it in two ways: the first one is at the beginning of page 182, and the second is at the end of page 189. Moreover Ahmad in *Musnad*, Ṭabarāni in *al-Mu'jam al-Kabīr* and *Kanz al-Ummāl*, vol. 1, pp. 47–48, relates it the same way. *Ghāyat al-Marām*, p. 211, quotes 39 Sunni *hadiths* and 82 Shi'a *hadiths* on page 217 about the two weighty things. The knowledgeable 'Allāmah Mirzā Najm al-Dīn Sharīf 'Askarī wrote a book called: *Muhammad wa Ali wa Hadith al-Thaqalayn wa Hadith al-Safinah* that cites fully the *hadith's* chains of transmission.
[94] In the second introduction of *Tafsīr al-Ṣāfi* by Fayḍ Kashani (Tehran: Tab' Islamiyyah, 1384), *cf. Tafsīr al-Ayyāshī*.
[95] In *Yanābi' al-Mawaddah*, p. 90, citing *Jam' al-Fawā'id*, the author explains Ali's being with the Qur'an and the Qur'an's being with him. He then says it is in *al-Awsaṭ* and *al-Ṣaghīr*. He also cites three *hadiths* from Khārazmī and Ḥamwīnī and from Zamakhsharī's *Rabī' al-Abrār* in *Ghāyat al-Marām*, p. 539. In *Ghāyat al-Marām*, p. 357, there are 6 Sunni narrations and 18 Shi'a narrations; there are a great many narrations on this matter in *Yanābi' al-Mawaddah*, p. 102.
[96] *al-Ghadīr*, p. 131, bottom, after citing this *hadith*: "Some of the memorizers have cited this *hadith* and Hakim and Dhahabi and Haythami consider it to be

authentic, as will be explained in detail. Concerning the murder of the Master of the Faithful, there are a great many narratives related in *Biḥār al-Anwār*, vol. 8, pp. 455, 456.

[97] In *Ghāyat al-Marām*, p. 103, there are 24 Sunni narrations and 19 Shi'a narrations on this subject.

[98] *Tafsīr al-Ṣāfi*, vol. 1, p. 364.

[99] Some of it is mentioned in the account of al-Ghadīr, and some in *Ghāyat al-Marām*, p. 214, under the heading *hadith* 18 and 19.

[100] This narration is cited in full in *Tafsīr al-Ṣāfi*, vol. 1, p. 364.

[101] *Tafsīr al-Ṣāfi*, vol. 1, p. 365.

[102] The *Murji'ah* (singular: *Murji'*) is an Islamic sect who believe that once someone believes, no sin can do him any harm, and if someone disbelieves, no act of obedience can do him any good. They were called *Murji'ah* because they believed God would postpone (*arja'*) punishment for their sins. Both fatalists and those who relegate matters to God are called *Qadriyyah*. *Zindīqs* are either atheists or dualists.

[103] *Uṣūl al-Kāfi*, vol. 1, p. 168, "Kitāb al-Ḥujjah."

[104] "Tāqī" is Mu'min Ṭāq, who had a shop under the arch (*ṭāq*) in the market. People nicknamed him Mu'min Ṭāq (the believer of the arch) after his pitch. Sunnis call him Shayṭān Ṭāq (Satan of the Arch) in their books.

[105] Sayyid Hasan Sadr, *Ta'sīs al-Shī'a li Ulūm al-Islām*, p. 358, al-Aḥwal (Cockeye): Famous Shi'ah theologian: "Another was Abū Ja'far Mu'min al-Ṭāq, whose shop used to be in Ṭāq al-Maḥāmil in Kufa. They would pay him cash, and he would reject the forged coins and make the alloyed coins known then. In this way it would become clear that his word was right. That is why they called him Shayṭān Ṭāq (The Devil of the Arch), but his name was Muhammad ibn 'Alī ibn Nu'mān ibn Abī Ṭarīqa Bajallī Aḥwal.

It has been narrated from Ali ibn al-Husayn, Abū Ja'far, and Abū 'Abdullāh: "His position and status in inscription and knowledge is too well known to the public to need mention. He was one of a kind in his time in theology and debate. He had theological debates with theologians of his time and disproved his opponents' arguments, never concurring or vying."

His works include: *If'al Lā Taf'al*, which is va ery long and interesting book, *al-Iḥtijāj*, concerning the Imamate of the Master of the Faithful, a book of his theological debate with the Kharijites, and a book of his seated discussions with Abū Hanifa and the Murji'ites. He is considered to be one of the successors (*tābi'in*). Ibn Nadim says, "He was an expert theologian, and wrote: *al-Imāmah, al-Ma'rifah, al-Radd 'alā al-Mu'tazila fi Imāmah al-Mafḍul*, and *Ṭalḥah wa Zubayr wa A'isha*, may God be pleased with them [sic]."

[106] Page 156, line 24; Ayatullah Sayyid Hasan Ṣadr, in *Ta'sīs al-Shī'a li Ulūm al-Islām*, considers Qays ibn Māṣir to be a well-known Shi'a theologian. He says, "One of them is Qays al-Māṣir, an eminent theologian, a famous Shī'a. He had students and was one of the Shī'a Shaykhs of theology. He was a better theologian than Hishām ibn al-Ḥakam and Ḥamdān al-Aḥwal; he learned theology from Ali ibn al-Husayn (as)."

Here, as Sayyid Hasan Sadr quotes what Imam Sadiq said about al-Aḥwal, Ḥamrān ibn A'yan, and Hishām ibn Sālim as cited in the narration from *al-Kāfī* in the main text. He then says at the end: I say, "Ḥamrān ibn A'yan is the brother of Zurārah ibn A'yan, and is a successor (*min ṭabaqah al-tābi'īn*), because he, al-Aḥwal Mu'min al-Ṭāq, and Qays ibn al-Māṣir learned theology from Zayn al-Ābidīn Ali ibn al-Husayn (as)."

[107] *Uṣūl al-Kāfī*, vol. 1, p. 171.

[108] *Uṣūl al-Kāfī*, vol. 1, p, 23.

[109] *Nahj al-Balāghah*, vol. 1, p. 29.

[110] *Nahj al-Balāghah*, vol. 1, p. 42.

[111] Ibid., p. 40.

[112] An allusion to the *hadith* narrated by both Shi'a and Sunnis

[113] *Ghāyat al-Marām*, p. 550, from Sulaym ibn Qays' book, quoting Salmān Fārsi, who narrates a long deathbed narration from the Prophet, appointing the Master of the Faithful as his executor. And this long narration has been divided into two parts in Sulaym's book: the first on pages 69 to 72, and the second on pages 79 to 83.

[114] In *Ghāyat al-Marām*, at the end of page 550, he relates a *hadith* from Salmān that says: "On the same night, after helping Fāṭimah onto her donkey, he asked forty-four of the Migrants and the Supporters to take up arms and pledge allegiance to him at the time of [the Prophet's] death, but only four of them responded positively." *Ghāyat al-Marām*, p. 550, relates a narrative from Salmān that says: "The same night, when the Holiness helped Fāṭimah onto the donkey, he asked forty-four of the Migrants and the Supporters to take up arms and pledge allegiance to him at the time of [the Prophet's] death, but only four of them responded positively."

[115] The content of Mu'āwiyah's letter is quite clear from the Master of the Faithful's reply, as cited in *Nahj al-Balāghah*, p. 33.

[116] *Abdullāh ibn Ṣabā'*, p. 65, says: "This group refused to pledge allegiance and took shelter in Fāṭimah's house." *al-Riyāḍ al-Naḍarah*, vol. 1, p. 167; *Tārikh al-Khamis*, vol. 1, p. 188; Ibn 'Abd Rabbih, *al-'Iqd al-Farīd*, vol. 3, p. 64; *Tarikh Abī al-Fidā'*, vol. 1, p. 156; Ibn Shaḥnah, *Bihāmish*; *al-Kāmil*, p. 112, Ibn Abī al-Ḥadid, *Sharḥ Nahj al-Balāghah*, vol. 2, pp. 130, 134; *al-Sirat al-Ḥalabiyyah*, vol. 3, pp. 394, 397.

[117] *Kanz al-'Ummāl*, vol. 3, p, 140.

[118] *Talakka'* means "he retarded, stopped." *Iḥtabasa* also means "he stopped and delayed."

[119] He cites this explanation from *Nahj al-Balāghah*, vol. 2, p. 19; vol. 1, p. 134.

[120] Ibid.

[121] *Nahj al-Balāghah*, p. 33, letter 28.

[122] Ibn Abī al-Ḥadid cites this letter in *Sharḥ Nahj al-Balāghah*, vol. 3, pp. 455–457. He proceeds to explain in detail: "Concerning this letter, I questioned Abū Ja'far al-Naqīb Yaḥyā ibn Abī Zayd, and he said: 'The Master of the Faithful replied

to two letters sent by Mu'āwiyah. In the first letter that Mu'āwiyah sent, there is no occurrence of *ka al-jamal al-makhshūsh*, but instead, there are some extra clauses to prove the fact. He had sent this letter with Abū Muslim al-Khawlānī to the Master of the Faithful. Then, when the Imam sent him a reply, he sent another letter with Abu al-Qāsim al-Bāhilī in which *ka al-jamal al-makhshūsh* appears. (It was Abu Ja'far who dictated Mu'āwiyah's letter to Ibn Abī al-Ḥadīd and the latter cites it on page 456). As can be seen in *Nahj al-Balāghah*, he answered him.'" Abū Ja'far al-Naqīb says: "Most people do not know the two letters. They just know Abū Muslim's letter and [mistakenly] include *ka al-jamal al-makhshūsh* in it." 'Allāmah Amīnī, *al-Ghadīr*, vol. 5, p. 78, says: "This term, *ka al-jamal al-makhshūsh*, appears in *al-'Iqd al-Farīd*, p. 285; *Subḥ al-A'shā*, vol. 1, p. 228; Ibn Abī al-Hadīd's *Sharḥ*, vol. 3, p. 407."

[123] Ahmad ibn Ali Ṭabarsi, *al-Iḥtijāj* (Najaf, n.p., n.d.), vol. 2, p. 325.

[124] Fakhr Rāzi raises the second, third, and fourth objections in his *Tafsir al-Kabir* (Egypt: Dār al-Ṭibā'at al-'Āmira), vol.1, p. 146; the rest of these objections, along with Fakhr's other objections, have been answered by 'Allāmah Ṭabāṭabā'i in *al-Mīzān*, vol. 4, pp. 417, 425, 466.

[125] We already cited some of their chains of narration, and, God-willing, we will cite the rest in out future discussion.

[126] Ibn al-Ḥajar al-Maythami, *al-Ṣawā'iq al-Muḥriqah* (Egypt: Dār al-Ṭibā'at al-Muhammadiyyah, 1375 A.H.), p. 108.

[127] Muwaffaqib ibn Ahmad al-Khārazmī, *al-Manāqib al-Khārazmī* (Najaf: Maṭba'at al-Ḥidariyyah, n.d.), p. 97.

[128] *Yanābi' al-Mawaddah*, p. 247; there are also many narratives from the Prophet stating that Ali, the Master of the Faithful, is the best human being, and all of them are recorded in Sunni books. We cited some of them at the beginning of this book and the narrator of some of them is 'Ā'ishah. In *Dhakhā'ir al-'Uqbā*, p, 96, it is related by 'Aqabat ibn Sa'd Awfī: "We went to Jābir ibn 'Abdullāh and found him so old that his grey eyebrows were falling onto his eyes. Then we asked him about Ali, Jābir lifted the grey hair away from his eyes, looked up at us, and said: 'That is the best of creation.'"

These exact words are also narrated in *Yanābī' al-Mawaddah*, p. 246, on the authority of Ali, Ḥudhayfah, and 'Ā'ishah: "Ali is the best of creation. Whoever resists has indeed fallen into disbelief." Page 247 says on the authority of 'Ā'ishah, about Ali: "Surely God has covenanted to me that whoever rebels against Ali is a hell-bound unbeliever and he will be put in Fire." [She] was asked, "So why did you rebel against him?" She replied, "I forgot this *hadith* at the Battle (*yawm*) of the Camel until I remembered it in Basra—and I seek God's forgiveness!"

[129] *Yanābī' al-Mawaddah*, p. 253.

[130] *Nahj al-Balāghah*, vol. 1, p. 30.

[131] *al-Manāqib al-Khārazmī*, p. 63.

[132] Muḥḥib ibn al-Dīn Ṭabari al-Shāfi'ī, *Dhakhā'ir al-'Uqbā* (Cairo: Maktabat al-Qudsi, 1356 A.H.), p. 66; Ibn Jawzi cites this narration in *al-Tadhkirah*, p. 15. Moreover, Muhammad ibn Ṭalḥah al-Shāfi'ī narrates it in *Maṭālib al-Su'ūl* from *Ṣaḥiḥ Tirmidhī*, quoting Zayd ibn Arqam. Ibn al-Ṣabbāgh al-Mālikī cites it in *al-Fuṣūl al-Muhimmah* by Ibn al-Ṣabbagh al-Mālikī (Najaf: Maṭba'at al-'Adl, n.d), p. 22, from *Saḥiḥ Tirmidhī*, quoting 'Abdullāh ibn 'Umar; it is also mentioned in *Nazm Durar al-Simṭayn*, Jamāl a-Din Zarandi Ḥanafi (Najaf: Maṭba'at al-Qaḍ', 1377 A.H.), p. 94.

[133] *Dhakhā'ir al-'Uqbā*, p. 66.

[134] *Dhakhā'ir al-'Uqbā*, p. 6.

[135] Ibid.

[136] Ibn al-Athir al-Jazari, *Usd al-Ghābah* (Beirut: Dār al-Ihyā', n.d.), vol. 4, p. 16; ibid., vol. 3, p. 317 from 'Abd-al-Raḥmān ibn 'Uwaym ibn Sā'idah al-Anṣārī, who relates that God's Messenger announced it to the people.

[137] *Yanābī' al-Mawaddah*, p. 142; Ibn al-Jawzī cites every part of this *hadith* in full in *al-Tadhkirah*, p. 13, on the authority of Ahmad ibn Ḥanbal and endorses it.

[138] *Yanābī' al-Mawaddah*, p. 143. It is also quoted in *Ghāyah al-Marām*, p. 481 from *Sharḥ Nahj al-Balāghah*.

[139] *al-Fuṣūl al-Muhimmah*, p. 2.

[140] *Ghāyat al-Marām*, p. 478, *hadith* 6 narrated by the Sunnis.

[141] Ibid., *hadith* 8 narrated by the Sunnis.

[142] Ibid., 479, *hadiths* 10 and 11; *Nazm Durar al-Simṭayn*, 94, *hadith* 1.

[143] Ibid., 481, *hadith* 18.

[144] Ibid., p. 481, *hadith* 23.

[145] Ibid., p. 486, *hadith* 36.

[146] *Ghāyah al-Marām*, p. 485, *hadith* 31; this *hadith* is in *Nazm Durar al-Simṭayn*, p. 96, and then worded slightly differently in *Arjaḥ al-Maṭālib* by Ubaydullah Ḥanaf, (Lahore: n.p., n.d.), p. 480; *cf. 'Alī wa al-Waṣiyyah*, p. 345; *ibid.*, p. 478, *hadith* 3; *Dalā'il al-Ṣidq*, vol. 2, p. 267 as per *Diwān al-Ḥimyarī*, and *Nazm Durar al-Simṭayn*, p. 95.

[147] *Ghāyat al-Marām*, 478, *hadith* 5.

[148]Ibid., 482, hadith 2.

[149] *Imām Shināsī*, vol. 1, pp. 84–100.

[150] Allāmah Amīnī narrates 50 *hadiths* about [the Prophet's] making [Alī] his brother in *al-Ghadīr*, vol. 3, pp. 112–124; Ismā'il ibn Ḥaymari, *Diwān al-Ḥimyarī* (Beirut: Maktabat al-Ḥayāt, n.d.), p. 209; *cf. A'yān al-Shī'a*, vol. 12, p. 248; Muhammad ibn Shahr Āshūb, *al-Manāqib Ibn Shahr Āshūb*, (Qum: Maṭba'at al-Allamah, n.d.), vol. 2, p. 189.

[151] Ibn Athīr, *al-Nihāyah*, vol. 1, p. 326: "'Hubāb' is another name for Satan, and is also said of a snake—though it is Satan's name. That is why the name Ḥubāb was changed—out of hatred for Satan." *Khabbāb* is derived from *khubb*, which means a *khaddā* (deceiver) who publicly slanders.

[152] *Maṭālib al-Su'ūl*, at the bottom of page 18; Ibn Abī al-Ḥadīd, *Sharḥ Nahj al-Balāghah*, vol. 18, p. 37, from Abū 'Umar, and *al-Isti'āb* say that the Prophet made Salmān and Abu al-Dardā' brothers; he did so when he was making the Muslims brothers to each other.

[153] *Knowing the Imams*, vol. 1.

[154] *Imām Shināsī*, vol. 1.

[155] *Dīwān al-Ḥimyarī*, p. 63: "He was a brother to him, and trustee in his absence to the revelation sent down when it was revealed!" *cf.* Sayyed Muhsin Amin Jabal Āmilī, *A'yān al-Shī'a* (Damascus: Ibn Zaydūn, 1363 A.H.), vol. 12, p. 214; *al-Manāqib* vol. 2, p. 13, vol. 3, p. 58.

[156] *al-Imāmat wa al-Siyāsah* vol. 1, p. 13, *Ghāyat al-Marām*, p. 546, under the heading "*Hadith* 2" from Ibn Abī al-Ḥadīd in *Sharḥ Nahj al-Balāghah*: "They were taking the Master of the Faithful towards the mosque and he was saying, 'I am God's servant and His Messenger's brother.'" The same *hadith* is narrated in Sulaym ibn Qays' book. This matter is the same one we cited from *al-Imāmat wa Siyāsah* where he relates 'Umar's rejection of the Master of the Faithful's being made [the Prophet's] brother, saying, "As for God's Messenger's brother, no." Ibn Abī al-Ḥadīd says in *Sharḥ Nahj al-Balāghah*, vol. 1, p. 111, "Many of the historians narrate that after the Day of the Saqīfah when he was hurt, persecuted, sought help, and shouted when they were taking him to attend and pledge allegiance, he said, pointing to the grave, '*O son of my mother, surely the people reckoned me weak and well-nigh slew me!*' (7:150) and said, 'Alas, Ja'far! And I have no Ja'far today! Alas, Ḥamzah! And I have no Ḥamzah today!'"; It is recorded in almost all narrations that 'Umar rejected [Ali's] having been made the Prophet's brother. However, Sulaym ibn Qays' book, p. 68, and *Ghāyah al-Marām*, p. 551 say on the authority of Sulaym that Abū Bakr also rejected what [the Imam] said.

[157] Ṭabarsī, *Makārim al-Akhlāq*, (n.p., manuscript, n.d.), 2 sermon p. 2.

[158] *Biḥār al-Anwār*, vol. 15, p. 48, "The Book of Ethics" citing *al-Kāfī*, says, "O people! By God, there is nothing that brings you closer to Heaven and distances you from Hell that I have not commanded you to do, and nothing that brings you closer to Hell and distances you from Heaven that I have not forbidden you from doing!"

[159] *Ghāyat al-Marām*, p. 618, *hadith* 1; *Naẓm Durar al-Simṭayn*, p. 114, from Abu al-Qāsim Sulaymān ibn Ahmad Ṭabarāni, via his chain of transmission from 'Abdullāh ibn Ḥakīm Juhnī, relates that: "God's Messenger (s) said: 'Surely God revealed three things to me about Ali on the night of the ascension: that he is the Master of the Faithful, the Imam of the God-fearing and the leader of the bright-faced, white-footed'"—he says in the footnote that Abū Nu'aym relates this narration in *Ḥilyah al-Awliyā'* vol. 1, p. 67.

[160] *Ghāyat al-Marām*, p. 618, *hadith* 9; *Naẓm Durar al-Simṭayn*, p. 115, from Ḥāfiz Abū Nu'aym Iṣfahānī, via his chain of transmission from Sha'bī. Abū Nu'aym also cites it in *Ḥilyah al-Awliyā'*, vol.1, p. 66.

[161] *Ghāyat al-Marām*, p. 619, *hadith* 12; *Naẓm Durar al-Simṭayn*, p. 124; *'Alī wa al-Waṣiyyah*, p. 196 onward cites three *hadiths*, reworded slightly, from *Arjaḥ al-Maṭālib*, Khārazmī's *Manāqib*, and *Farā'id al-Simṭayn*.

[162] *Ghāyat al-Marām*, p. 620, *hadith* 16.

[163] Ibid., *hadith* 17.

[164] Ibid., *hadith* 18.

[165] Ibid., *hadith* 19.

[166] *Ghāyah al-Marām*, p. 621, *hadith* 21; in *'Alī wa al-Waṣiyyah*, pp, 223–226, the author cites three *hadiths* with similar content from Ganjī Shāfi'ī's *Kifāyah al-Ṭālib* (Najaf: Haydariyyah, 1390 A.H.), Khārazmī's *Manāqib*; Qandūzī Ḥanafī's *Yanābī' al-Mawaddah*. He also relates three *hadiths* from Ibn Asākir's *al-Tārikh al-Kabīr* (manuscript) in *Istidrakat 'Alī wa al-Waṣiyyah* (*The Omissions from Ali and the Executorship*). The meaning of these *hadiths* is exactly the same as that of those cited above, such as: "This is Ali ibn Abī Ṭālib, the successor after the Prophet (s); he is the Imam for the believers and the leader in blissful Heaven."

[167] *Ghāyat al-Marām*, p. 621, *hadith* 21.

[168] Ibid., p. 621, *hadith* 1.

[169] Ibid., *hadith* 1.

[170] A great number of volumes from Ibn 'Asākir's history remain unpublished, and can be found in many libraries around the world. One of those that remain unpublished is dedicated exclusively to the life and times of the Master of the Faithful. The Late 'Allāmah Amīnī instructed the scholars of Najaf to take a photocopy of the manuscript and store it in the Imam, the Master of the Faithful's library in Najaf. Now, we have cited the narration from that copy assuming the author of *'Alī wa al-Waṣiyyah* has cited it correctly on page 376.

[171] All the scholars we have cited agree on the wording of this *hadith* except for a few minor points, which we shall mention: 1) Khārazmī says: "He then started wiping the sweat from his forehead and wiping Ali's face on his own face." 2) Ibn 'Asākir says, "He then began wiping his face and wiping Ali's sweat onto his own face." 3) Ibn Shahr Āshūb says, "He then began wiping the sweat off his face with his own face," without mentioning the second part. 4) Qundūzi and Ibn Abī al-Ḥadīd say, "He then began wiping the sweat off his face," also omitting the other part. 5) Ibn Abī al-Ḥadīd cites the beginning of the *hadith* as follows: "The Imam of the God-fearing, Chief of the Muslims, drone of the religion, seal of the executors, and the leader of the bright faced, white-footed."

[172] It may be said that seal of the executors means the seal of the Prophets' Executor, so it is not conceptually separate from "I am the seal of the Prophets." If it meant that executorship ends with him, the other Imams would not be God's Messenger's Executors, but the Executor's Executors. They are in fact also God's Messenger's Executors.

[173] In the year 57 A.H., when Mu'āwiyah appointed Yazīd as his successor, and the Pilgrimage season was approaching, the Master of the Martyrs set out for the *hajj* pilgrimage to Mecca. 'Abdullāh ibn Ja'far, 'Abdullāh ibn 'Abbās, a group of [other] male and female Hāshimites, and some followers were with him. Therefore, at Minā, he delivered a lengthy sermon cited in *Nāsikh al-Tawarīkh*, "Sayyid al-Shuhadā," vol.1 p. 210.

[174] Abū Nu'aym says in *Ḥilyah*, p. 66: "The Prophet (s) said: 'Do not curse Ali because he truly is touched by the Transcendent God's Essence.'"

[175] *Ghāyat al-Marām*, p. 19, *hadith* 28.

[176] *al-Manāqib al-Ṣaghīr*, p. 64, *Ali wa al-Sunnah*.

[177] Ibid., p. 66.

[178] *Yanābī' al-Mawaddah*, p. 238, also says under the heading *Hadith* 49: "Abū Hurayra narrates that the Prophet (s) said: 'When I was taken on the journey on the Night of Ascension, the Prophets gathered around me in Heaven and the Transcendent God revealed to me, "Mohammad, ask them, 'What were you sent with?'" They replied, "We were sent to testify that there is no god but God alone, and to confess your prophecy and Ali ibn Abī Ṭālib's guardianship."'" (Narrated by al-Hāfiz Abū Nu'aym).

[179] This *hadith* appears in *'Alī wa al-Waṣiyyah*, pp. 26, 27.

[180] Sibṭ ibn al-Jawzī, *Tadhkirah al-Khawāṣ*, pp. 49–50.

[181] Some narrations say منا instead of: منهما. If منهما is correct, it is because the Mahdī's male ascending line traces back to Husayn ibn Ali, the Master of the Martyrs. He is also a descendant of Imam Hasan Mujtabā, because Imam Sajjād married Imam Hasan's daughter. Because Imam Mahdi is a descendant of Imam Bāqir; that is how he is a descendant of Imam Hasan—through Imam Hasan's daughter.

[182] *'Alī wa al-Waṣiyyah*, pp. 215–217.

[183] Some lexicographical books say that the word *'illah* in this narrative means "illness," and then in the process of time, it also came to mean "cause." It may be said that because of this the narrative must have been fabricated, unless it is a non-verbatim record. Otherwise it is rare for a phrase to have meant something but subsequently lost its original meaning.

[184] *Dīwān al-Ḥimyarī*, p. 59 from *A'yān al-Shī'a*, vol. 12, p. 212; seven cases are cited from *al-Manāqib*.

[185] *Dīwān al-Ḥimyarī*, p. 63, Cf. *A'yān al-Shī'a*, vol. 12, p. 214; *al-Manāqib* vol. 2, p. 13, vol. 3, p. 58.

[186] *Dīwān al-Ḥimyarī*, p. 114, in the ode known as the *Mudhahhabah*, cited in *A'yān al-Shī'a* vol. 12, pp. 212, 114; *al-Kunā wa al-Alqāb*; *Ṭabaqāt al-Shu'arā'*; *al-Manāqib*; *al-Ḥayawān* by Jāḥiẓ; *Kashf al-Ghummah* and many other sources. *Dhurā* is the plural of *dhurwah*, meaning the top of something. *Qawādim* is the plural of *qādimah*. The *qawādim* are the four feathers at the front of a bird's wing. Behind them are the *Manāqib*, then the *abāhir*, and behind them are the *khawāfī*, followed by the *dhanābī*. They are all fours, making a total of twenty.

[187] *Dīwān al-Ḥimyarī*, p. 128; *cf. A'yān al-Shī'a* vol. 12, p. 217; *al-Manāqib*, vol. 2, p. 36, vol. 3, p. 50.

[188] *Dīwān al-Ḥimyarī*, p. 216; *A'yān al-Shī'a*, vol. 12, p. 248, *al-Manāqib*, vol. 2, p. 157, vol. 3, pp. 6, 348.

[189] Ibid., p. 201; *A'yān al-Shī'a*, vol. 12, p. 251.

[190] Ibid., p. 224; *A'yan al-Shī 'a*, vol. 12, p. 247; *al-Manāqib*, vol. 3, p. 56.

[191] Ibid., p. 232; *al-Ghadīr*, vol. 2, p. 219; *al-Aghāni* vol. 7, p. 269; *al-Manāqib* vol. 3, p. 33.

[192] Ibid., p. 275; *Majmū'ah al-Maktabah al-Ẓāhiriyyah*, p. 195.

[193] Ibid., p. 304; *al-Ghadīr*, vol. 2, p. 205.

[194] *Manāqib Ibn Shahr Āshūb*, vol. 1, pp. 544–545.

[195] Ibid., p. 54.

[196] Ibid., p. 545.

[197] Ibid., p. 545.

[198] Ibid., p. 546.
[199] Ibid., p. 546; Ibn Abī al-Ḥadīd, *Sharḥ Nahj al-Balāghah*, vol. 11, p. 120.
[200] For a brief description of Ayatullah Muhammad Ṣādiq Ṭihrānī's activities against Riḍā Shah's government, see 'Allāmah Ṭihrānī: *Waẓīfa-yi Fard-i Musalmān dar Iḥyā'-i Ḥukūmat-i Islām*, compiled and edited by Muhsin Sa'īdian (Tehran), 1410 A.H. (1989 C.E.). For an account of the scholars' reaction to Riḍā Shah's government and his policies, see Mohammad H. Faghfoory, "Ulama-State Relations in Iran: 1921" in *International Journal of Middle East Studies*, 19 (November 1987), pp. 413–432; and "The Impact of Modernisation on the Ulama in Iran: 1925–1941," in *Journal of Iranian Studies*, 26:3–4 (Summer–Fall 1993), pp. 277–312.
[201] For a short biography of 'Allāmah Ṭabāṭabā'ī in English, see Seyyed Hossein Nasr's introduction to Ṭabāṭabā'ī's *Shi'ite Islam*, translated from the Persian (Albany: State University of New York Press), 1975. For his biography in Persian, see 'Allāmah Muhammad Ḥusayn Ḥusayni Ṭihrānī Mihr-i Tābān (Mashhad: University of Mashhad Press, 1417 A.H./1996).
[202] Ibid.
[203] *Rūḥ-i Mujarrad* (*The Detached Spirit*), p. 22.
[204] *Rūḥ-i Mujarrad* (*The Detached Spirit*), p. 22.
[205] *Lubb al-Lubāb dar Sayr wa Sulūk-i Ulū al-Albāb* (*Kernel of the Kernel Concerning the Wayfaring and Spiritual Journey of the People of Intellect*), (State University of New York Press, pp. xxii-xxx, Translated by Mohammad H. Faghfoory.

INDEX OF QUR'ANIC REFERENCES

(2:24), 92
(2:93), 96
(2:100), 77
(2:120), 81
(2:145), 81
(2:165), 25
(2:170), 106
(2:180-181), 181
(2:215), 39
(2:222), 39
(2:238), 149
(2:243, 12:38, 40:61), 78
(2:247), 97
(2:269), 97
(3:32), 130
(3:56), 93
(3:110, 9:8), 78
(3:132), 130
(3:159), 5
(4:54–55), 98
(4:59), 3, 6, 33, 130, 151, 179
(4:60), 152
(4:61), 152
(4:64), 5, 74, 130, 152
(4:105), 4
(4:113), 97
(4:153), 73
(5:3), 91, 157, 179
(5:44), 121
(5:45), 121
(5:47), 121
(5:48), 121
(5:49), 121
(5:55), 156
(5:59), 78
(5:103), 79
(5:104), 106
(6:21–23), 96
(6:37), 80
(6:38), 91
(6:57), 120
(6:89), 38
(6:111), 79
(6:116), 76
(6:119), 76, 108
(6:120–121), 116
(6:124), 72
(6:151–153), 53
(7:17), 78
(7:28), 21
(7:102), 78
(7:131), 80
(7:146), 159
(7:150), 175, 176
(7:187), 80
(8:1), 39
(8:29), 25, 90
(8:34), 80
(8:45), 25
(8:59), 68
(8:74), 25
(9:30), 95
(9:87), 96
(10:2), 25
(10:4), 25
(10:32)., 121
(10:35), 97
(10:55), 80
(10:60, 27:73), 78
(10:92), 79
(10:96–97), 159
(11:17), 77
(11:98), 118
(12:32), 80
(12:103), 77
(12:105–106), 159
(12:106), 77
(13:16), 75
(13:30–31), 66
(13:37), 121
(13:43), 128
(14:27), 25
(15:9), 38
(15:88), 150
(16:38), 80
(16:44), 4
(16:83), 78
(17:36), 109
(18:28), 115
(18:83), 40
(20:49–50), 59
(20:105), 40
(21:59), 68
(21:72–73), 92
(22:30–31), 65
(22:35), 26
(23:70), 77
(23:70–71), 75
(24:54), 130
(25:44), 79
(25:50), 78
(25:52), 115, 149
(25:63–68), 24
(25:72–74), 24
(25:75), 193
(26:8), 77
(26:67), 77
(26:103), 77
(26:121), 77
(26:139), 77
(26:151), 115
(26:158), 77
(26:174), 77
(26:190), 77
(28:13–57), 80
(28:54), 26
(28:68), 73, 95
(28:69), 72

(29:4), 68
(29:8), 116
(29:38), 95
(29:47–49), 128
(29:58), 192
(29:63), 79
(30:6–30), 80
(30:8), 78
(30:30), 58, 179
(30:31–32), 61
(30:42), 77
(32:7), 58
(32:16), 26
(33:4), 71
(33:33), 9, 132, 157
(33:36), 95
(33:48), 115
(33:67), 149
(33:67–68), 116
(34:6), 72
(34:28–36), 80
(34:37), 193
(36:7), 77
(36:12), 128
(38:26), 121
(38:27), 57
(39:9), 74
(39:20), 193
(39:49), 80
(40:35), 99
(40:57), 80
(41:3–4), 79
(41:41–42), 38
(42:7), 141
(42:15), 81
(42:17), 59
(43:23), 105
(43:28), 38
(43:78), 77
(44:39), 80
(45:18–19), 63
(45:23), 108
(45:26), 80
(47:8), 98
(47:14), 108
(47:24), 96
(47:33), 130
(49:7), 122
(51:47), 80
(53:3), 171
(53:21–23), 62
(53:28), 109
(57:21), 96
(57:28), 90
(58:11), 25
(59:7), 129
(61:7), 108
(61:9), 59
(62:2), 148
(62:4), 98
(64:12), 130
(68:8), 115, 149
(68:10), 115
(68:36–41), 95
(76:24), 115
(84:6–12), 59
(89:29), 65
(96:19), 116
(98:5), 107
(98:7), 26
(103:3), 26

GENERAL INDEX

A

Aaron, 9, 90, 158, 165, 166, 167, 170, 173, 175, 176, 183, 197, 198, 204, 243
'Abaqāt al-Anwār, 10
'Abbās, 'Abdullāh ibn, 118
'Abbās, Ibn, 23, 160, 183, 184, 185, 197, 206, 210, 214, 215, 218, 220, 229, 230, 233, 238, 239, 244, 266
Abdullāh ibn Ṣabā', 267, 271
Ābidīn, Imam Zayn al-, 221
Abraham, 76, 92, 93, 97, 148, 165, 204
Ād, 30
Ahmad, Muwaffaq ibn, 160, 171, 200
'Ā'ishah, 163, 184, 266, 269
Ali wa al-Sunnah, 195, 207, 238, 275
'Alī wa al-Waṣiyyah, 205, 211, 215, 219, 237, 238, 273, 274, 275, 276
Allah, Qazi Nūr, 30
A'mash, al-, 220, 227
Āmilī, Shaykh Ḥurr al-, 266
Amīn, Aḥmad, 269
Amīnī, 'Allāmah, 111, 267, 268, 272, 273, 275
'Ammār, 14, 33, 34, 35, 67, 84
'Amr, Ibn, 171
Anas, Mālik ibn, 114, 169, 170, 189, 190, 191, 194, 195, 196, 197, 198, 207, 208, 209, 210, 215, 217, 218, 229, 239
Ansāb al-Ashrāf, 44, 267
Anṣāri, Abū Ayyūb al-, 223
Anṣārī, Jābir ibn 'Abdullāh al-, 11, 164
Aqīṣā, Abū Saīd, 240
Arjaḥ al-Maṭālib, 162, 230, 273, 274
Arqam, Zayd ibn, 166, 167, 273
Asākir, Ibn al-, 190, 191, 229, 238, 275
Ashja'ī, 'Awf ibn Mālik al-, 112
Ashras, Thumāmah ibn, 85
Ashtar, Mālik, 16
Āshūb, Ibn Shahr, 9, 10, 13, 23, 190, 209, 214, 217, 238, 239, 273, 275
Āshūb, Ibn Shahr, 9, 10, 13, 23, 190, 214, 217, 238, 239, 275
Askari, Allamah Sayyed Murtaḍā, 267
Askari, Imam Hasan, 155
Aslamī, Abū Barzah al-, 198
Athīr, Ibn al-, 192, 193, 273
authority, iii, viii, 1, 3, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 19, 20, 21, 22, 27, 33, 34, 35, 36, 37, 38, 40, 46, 52, 57, 60, 71, 72, 75, 76, 81, 82, 87, 98, 103, 107, 111, 114, 117, 118, 119, 124, 127, 129, 130, 131, 133, 134, 136, 137, 147, 148, 149, 150, 151, 152,153, 154, 155, 160, 161, 165, 166, 168, 170, 172, 173, 179, 195, 196, 197, 200, 201, 217, 218, 235, 240, 246, 265, 266, 267, 272, 273
'Awf, 'Abd al-Raḥmān ibn, 42
Awfī, 'Aqabat ibn Sa'd, 272
Awsaṭ, al-, 226, 269
A'yan, Ḥamrān ibn, 271
A'yan, Zurārah ibn, 271
A'yān al-Shī'ah, 273, 274, 276
āyat al-mubāhalah, 156
āyat al-taṭhir, 156

Ayyāshī, al-, 130, 131, 265
Ayyūb, Abā, 210, 225
Aziz, Sheikh Safi al-Din ibn Abdul, 29
Azwar, Ḍirār ibn, 50

B

Badrān, Sheikh 'Abd al-Ḥāfiẓ ibn, 182
Baghawī, Abū al-Qasim Abdullah ibn Muhammad ibn 'Abd al-'Azīz, 171, 205
Bāhilī, Abu al-Qāsim al-, 272
Baḥrānī, Sayyid Hāshim, 171, 190, 265
Bakr, Muhammad ibn Abī, 16, 28, 40, 42, 43, 44, 45, 46, 47, 48, 49, 50, 51, 52, 53, 66, 86, 109, 110, 111, 123, 129, 142, 143, 160, 162, 163, 166, 171, 175, 211, 221, 235, 249, 267, 268, 274
Bakri, Hussein ibn Muhammad ibn al-Hasan al-, 267
Balādhurī, 267
Bāqillānī, Abū Bakr, 111
Bāqir, Imam Mohammad, 10, 12, 188, 221, 266, 276
Barkhiyā, Āsif ibn, 245
Barzah, Abū, 200
Baṣīr, Abū, 7, 10
Basra, 118, 272
Battle of the Camel, 269
bi manzilatī, 160
Bihāmish, 271
Biḥār al-Anwār, 266, 270, 274
Bukhārī, Muhammad ibn Ismā'il, 114, 266
Buraydah, Ibn, 10, 205, 208, 210, 221
Būrhān, al-, 11, 265, 266
Būrhān fī Tafsīr al Qur'ān, al-, 265

D

Dār al-Nadwah, 76
Dardā', Abu al-, 274
Dawlah, Sayyid Naqīb Kāmil Mostaẓhir al-, 221
Day of Resurrection, 3, 15, 19, 23, 33, 57, 71, 92, 93, 95, 103, 118, 130, 138, 168, 187, 195, 239, 265
Daylamī, 162
Dāzim, Mansūr ibn, 133
devil, 27, 64, 66, 67
Dhahabi, 269
Dhakhā'ir al-'Uqbā, 160, 162, 171, 205, 208, 217, 247, 272, 273
Dharr, Abū, 14, 67, 142, 168, 219
Dhū al-Qarnayn, 40
Dīnawarī, Abū Qutaybah, 66, 267
Ḍirār, 268
divorce, 60
Dīwān al-Ḥimyarī, 273, 274, 276
Durar al-Simṭayn, 171, 273
Durr al-Manthūr, 40, 266, 269

E

Encyclopedia, 268

F

fa a'ṭāni dhālik, 265
Faḍā'il 'Alī wa Awlādihi, 184
Fajr al-Islām, 269

Farā'id al-Simṭayn, 171, 189, 206, 214, 215, 219, 220, 226, 230, 231, 232, 233, 234, 237, 274

Farsi, Salmān, 67, 206, 207, 208, 209, 210, 211, 217, 235, 237, 271, 274
Fāṭimah, 9, 10, 14, 42, 86, 123, 124, 132, 142, 143, 157, 161, 167, 175, 221, 222, 223, 224, 225, 226, 227, 228, 271
Ferdaus, al-, 168, 213, 239
Ferdaus al-Akhbār, 162, 206, 219
Fidā, Tārīkh Abī al-, 267, 268
furū', 6
Fuṣūl al-Muhimmah, 171, 226, 273

G

Gabriel, 4, 120, 158, 184, 194, 213, 214
Ghadīr, 111, 130, 267, 268, 269, 270, 272, 273, 276
Ghaflah, Suwayd ibn, 113
Ghāyah al-Marām, 7, 9, 10, 11, 13, 171, 190, 195, 197, 200, 202, 218, 228, 229, 231,233, 237, 238, 265, 266, 267, 269, 270, 271, 273, 274, 275
Ghifārī, Zubayr Abū Dharr, al-, 14, 166, 171, 187, 219

H

Ḥabīb, Haytham ibn, 221
Ḥabībah, Umm, 196
Haddad, Hājj Sayyid Ḥāshim Musavi, 221
Ḥadīd, Ibn Abī al-, 27, 142, 168, 193, 201, 202, 212, 272, 274, 275, 277
Ḥāfiẓ, Abū Nu'aym Aḥmad ibn Abdillāh al-, 184
Ḥajar, Ibn, 43
hajj, 4, 8, 85, 109, 119, 135, 150, 275*ḥajj al-tamattu'*, 119

Ḥakam, 14, 135, 137
Ḥakam, Marwān ibn al-, 266
Hamadānī, Sayyid Ali Shāfi'ī, 205
Ḥamiri, Abdul Malik ibn Hishām al-, 268
Ḥamrān, 135, 137
Ḥamwīnī, Ibrāhīm ibn Muḥammad Sa'īd ibn Jubayr, 167, 169, 183, 191, 205, 206, 214, 215, 218, 219, 220, 225, 226, 232, 233, 234, 269
Ḥanafī, Jamāl al-Dīn Muhammad ibn Yūsuf Zarandī, 171, 273
Ḥanafī, Khārazmī, 237
Ḥanafī, Mullā 'Alī Muttaqī, 171, 227
Ḥanafī, Qundūzī, 165, 201, 206, 214, 218, 219, 220, 226, 230, 233, 238, 266, 275
Ḥanbal, Abdullah ibn Ahmad ibn, 28, 163, 164, 165, 169, 170, 209, 213, 230, 267, 268, 269, 273
Ḥanīfa, Abū, 36
Ḥārith, 49
Ḥasakāni, Hākim, 12
Ḥasan, 8, 9, 84, 128, 157, 161, 226, 235
Hāshim, Banī,, 110, 245
Ḥaymari, Ismā'il ibn, 273
Haythamī, Ibn Ḥajar, 223, 238

Heaven, 12, 47, 58, 63, 64, 67, 71, 120, 128, 158, 164, 165, 172, 173, 187, 191, 192, 194, 199, 204, 216, 217, 222, 224, 226, 232, 240, 274, 275, 276
Hell, 15, 24, 73, 98, 118, 120, 128, 141, 180, 187, 204, 232, 274
Hilālī, Sūlaym ibn Qays al-, 10, 13
Ḥillī, Muḥaqqiq, 46
Ḥilyah, 202, 275
Ḥilyah al-Awliyā', 189, 200, 201, 223, 266, 274
Ḥimyarī, Sayyid Ismā'īl, 171, 241
Hishām, Ibn, 44
Ḥubāb, Mu'āwiyah ibn Abī Sufyān, 172, 273
Hūd, 76
Ḥuḍayr, Usayd ibn, 109
Hudhalī, Makhdūj ibn Zayd al-, 165
Ḥudhayfah, Abū, 67, 109, 111, 134, 166, 172, 272
ḥukm, 110
Ḥunayf, 'Uthmān ibn, 118
Hunayn, 86
Hurayrah, Abū, 34, 114
Ḥusayn, Ali ibn, 8, 9, 128, 131, 132, 133, 157, 161, 206, 213, 226, 236, 240, 245
Ḥuṣayn, Imrān ibn, 266

I

Ibānah al-Falakī, 10
Ibrāhīm, Ghiyāth ibn, 213, 214, 215
Ikmāl al-Dīn, 267
'Ikrimah, 119
If'al Lā Taf'al, 270
Iḥqāq al-Ḥaqq, 43
Iḥtijāj, al-, 188, 270, 272
ijtihād, 52
Imām Shināsī, 273, 274
Imāmah wa al-Siyāsah, al-, 267, 268, 269, 274
Imrān, Musā ibn, 135
infallibility, viii, 3, 7, 14, 19, 20, 21, 22, 33, 35, 36, 37, 38, 39, 40, 41, 43, 45, 46, 52, 72, 74, 92, 98, 99, 103, 109, 110, 118, 119, 127, 138, 147, 148, 151, 153, 154, 179
iqāmah, 52
Isaac, Ibn, 204
Iṣfahāni, Hafiz Abū Nu'aym Ahmad ibn Abdillah, 189, 200, 274
Isḥāq, Muhammad ibn, 205, 221

J

Jābir, Ismā'īl ibn, 67, 138, 183, 218
Ja'far, Abū, 29, 171, 198, 221, 224, 226, 265, 270, 272, 274, 275
Ja'far, Imam Mūsā ibn, 154
Jāḥīẓ, 85, 86
Jami' al-Fawā'id, 269
Jarīr, Ibn, 114
Jarrāḥ, Abū 'Ubaydah ibn al-, 109, 249
Jawzi, Sheikh Abū al-Faraj Abd al-Raḥmān ibn Ali ibn al-, 28, 171, 273
Jawzī, Sibṭ ibn, 208, 216
Jazari, Hassan ibn Athir, 273
jihad, 4, 20, 23, 26, 60, 93, 109

Jubayr, Hakīm ibn, 168, 183, 214, 218, 230
Juᶜfī, Salamah ibn Yazīd al-, 112
Juhanī, 'Utbah ibn 'Āmir al-, 198, 202, 203
Juhnī, 'Abdullāh ibn Ḥakīm, 274
Jūzdāniyyah, Abdullah, 221
Juzrī, 267

K

Ka'b, Ubayy ibn, 142
Ka'ba, 135, 168
Kāfi, al-, 11, 130, 265, 271, 274
kalām, 134
Kāmil, al-, 268
Kanz al-'Ummāl, 162, 171, 227, 269, 271
Kasāei, Ubaydullah ibn Ahmad, 265
Kashani, Fayḍ, 269
Kashf al-Ghummah, 276
Kathīr, Ibn, 164, 171
Kawkab al-Durri, al-, 211
khabar, 99
Khalid, Hasan ibn, 231
Khalīl, Hafiz Abū al-Ḥajjāj Yūsuf ibn, 221
Khārazmī, 160, 198, 205, 224, 269
Kharijites, 270
Khaṭṭāb, 'Umar ibn al-, 44, 45, 113, 188, 237
Khawlānī, Abū Muslim al-, 272
Khudrī, Abū Sa'īd al-, 186, 207, 228
Kifāyah al-Ṭālib, 189, 206, 227, 229, 275
Kindī, al-Ash'ath ibn Qays al-, 243
Kitāb al-Ḥujjah, 270
Knowing the Imams, 274
Kufa, 270
Kūfī, Sulaym ibn Qays al-, 237
Kulaynī, Muhammad ibn Ya'qūb, 7, 11, 91, 133, 229
Kumayt, 244
Kunūz al-Ḥaqā'iq fī Ḥadīth Khayr al-Khalā'iq, 171, 206, 219
Kurāni, Abdullah Muhammad ibn Abi Zayd al-, 221

L

Lahab, 'Utbah ibn Abī, 142, 243
Laylā, Ibn Abī, 184
li-ibnatihi Fāṭimah, 227
Lisān al-'Arab, 192, 193

M

Ma'rifah, al-, 270
Mahdī, 11, 183, 220, 222, 223, 224, 226, 230, 233, 234, 245, 276
Mahyār, 28
Majālis al-Mu'minīn, 46, 267
Majālis al-Mufīd, 266
Majāshi'ī, Ibn Yazīd al-, 172

Mājashūnī, Ali ibn Badī' al-, 213
Majlisī, Muhammad Bāqir, 266
Majma' al-Zawā'id, 223
Majmū'ah al-Maktabah al-Ẓāhiriyyah, 276
Makārim al-Akhlāq, 274
Mālik, 'Abd al-, 29, 41
Mālik, Anas ibn, 162, 198, 209, 228, 239, 247

Manāqib, 10, 162, 164, 171, 189, 196, 197, 198, 202, 203, 205, 207, 208, 209, 213, 214, 215, 217, 218, 220, 223, 225, 228, 229, 237, 239, 240, 274, 275, 276
Manāqib al-Khārazmī, 272
Manāqib ibn Shahr Āshūb, 10
Manāqib Ibn Shahr Āshūb, 273, 276
Manaw, Abd al-Ra'ūf, 206
Manāwī, al-, 171
Manṣūr, 217
Maqtal, 228
Maqtal al-Husayn, 228
Mardawayh, Ibn, 162, 195, 196, 207
marriage, 4, 60, 119, 225
Marwan, 41
Mas'ūd, Abdullāh ibn, 14, 84, 86, 87, 134
Mas'ūdī, Abū al-Ḥasan Ali ibn al-Husayn ibn Ali, 84, 85, 86, 87
Maṣābīḥ al-Sunnah, 171
Māṣir, Qays ibn, 135, 137, 270, 271
Masrūq, Abū, 11, 12
Maṭālib al-Su'ūl, 171, 189, 201, 266, 273, 274
Mawaddah al-Qurbā, 161, 202, 206, 210
Māwardī, 109
Mawlawi, Mathnawi, 268
Maythami, Ibn al-Ḥajar al-, 272
Mecca, 76, 104, 230, 275
Medina, 9, 10, 14, 45, 46, 48, 50, 51, 76, 104, 143, 183, 218, 265
mi'rāj, 228
min al-ahādīth al-ḥasan, 163
min ṭabaqah al-tābi'in, 271
Minā, 194, 275
Miqdād, 67, 142, 166
Miqdām, 113
Miṣbāḥ al-Munīr, 191
Miṣri, Muhammad ibn Zurayq ibn Jāmi' al-, 221
Mizān, al-, 265, 266, 269
Monotheism, 60, 61, 62, 63, 64, 65, 80, 99, 117, 194, 195, 202, 245, 246, 248, 265
Moses, 9, 58, 59, 72, 76, 90, 158, 165, 166, 167, 170, 173, 175, 176, 183, 186, 197, 198, 204, 205, 206, 207, 208, 209, 210, 211, 245
Mu'ālī, Imam Abū al-, 110
Mu'āwiyah, Burayd ibn, 41, 42, 73, 84, 85, 86, 89, 114, 117, 142, 143, 194, 216, 217, 220, 249, 265, 269, 271, 272, 275
Mu'jam al-Kabīr, al-, 223, 225, 227, 269
Mu'jam al-Ṣaḥābah, 205
Mudhahhabah, 276
Mufid, Sheikh, 155
Muhammad wa Ali wa Hadith al-Thaqalayn wa Hadith al-Safīnah, 269
Muhammad, Ibn al-Maghāzilī Ali ibn, 228
Muhammad, Ja'far ibn, 213, 220
Mujāhid, Ali ibn, 9, 10, 23, 205, 217, 265
Mujtabā, Imam Hasan, 276
mujtahid, 20
Muntahā al-Āmāl, 266
Muntaẓim, 28
Murtaḍā, Ali al-, 42
Murūj al-Dhahab, 84, 269
Mūsāwi, Sayyid Fakhkhār ibn Ma'd, 46

Muslim, 'Abd al-'Azīz ibn, 91
Musnad Ahmad, 268
Musnad, al-, 165, 169, 171, 209, 213, 268, 269
Muṣṭafā, al-, 171
Muṭṭalib, 'Abbās ibn 'Abd al-, 140, 142, 170, 172, 212, 213, 228
Muwāfaqah, al-, 160

N

Na'thal, 206
Naḍarah, al-Riyāḍ al-, 271
Nadim, Ibn, 270
Nāfi, 215
Nahj al-Balāghah, 15, 26, 138, 162, 194, 266, 267, 268, 269, 271, 272, 274
Naqi, Imam Ali al-, 155
Naqīb, Abū Ja'far al-, 272
Nāsikh al-Tawarīkh, 275
Naẓm Durar al-Simṭayn, 273, 274
Nihāyah al-'Uqūl, 267
Nu'aym, al-Hāfiz Abū, 184, 191, 200, 201, 274, 275, 276
Nu'mān, Muhammad ibn, 135
Nu'mānī, 138
Nubātah, Aṣbagh ibn, 188
Nuwayrah, Mālik ibn, 42, 46, 48, 49, 50, 51, 52

O

obedience, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 19, 20, 21, 22, 35, 36, 37, 72, 80, 82, 84, 112, 113, 114, 119, 120, 129, 130, 133, 134, 147, 150, 151, 152, 153, 154, 155, 175, 186, 232, 238, 240, 246, 265, 266, 270

P

polytheism, 62, 77
prayer, 4
prayer-duel, 12

Q

Qaḥāfa, Abū, 67
Qandūzī, 275
Qāsim, Abū Maryam Abdul-Ghaffār ibn, 205, 274
Qatādah, Abū, 49, 51, 52
qiblah, 81
Qumi, 266, 267
Qummī, Ibn Bābawayh, 188
Qummī, Muḥaddith, 46
Qummī, Shādhān ibn Jibra'īl, 46
Qundūzi,Sheikh Sulaymān Ḥanafi al-, 275
Quraysh, 76, 96, 110, 123, 159, 188, 245
Qurṭubī, 110
Qūshchi, 43
Qutaybah, Ibn, 66, 175

R

Rab'ī, 'Abāyah ibn, 220, 223, 226, 227
Rabī' al-Abrār, 269
Raḍī, Sayyid, 26, 27
Rāfi', Abū, 168, 239
Rāfiḍī, Nāṣibī, 86
raka'āt, 8
Ramaḍān, 47
Rashid, Harūn al-, 87
Rāzī, Fakhr, 14, 34, 35, 37, 40, 43, 46, 52, 147, 155
Rāzī, Ḥamīd, 205

Riḍā, Ali ibn Mūsā al-, 91, 154, 187, 218, 231
Riyāḍ al-Naḍrah, 160, 161, 205, 208, 217, 247, 268
Rūzbihān, Faḍl ibn, 43

S

Sa'd, Bashīr ibn, 109, 142
Sa'īd, 'Umar ibn, 13, 207, 214
Ṣādiq, Abū 'Abdillāh Ja'far ibn Muhammad al-, 138, 203
Ṣādiq, Imam, 11, 12, 13, 130, 131, 132
Ṣadr, Ayatollah Sayyid Hasan, 270
Ṣadūq, Sheikh, 10, 188, 266, 267, 269
Saffāh, Abdullah, 86
Safīnah al-Biḥār, 267
Ṣaghīr, al-, 171, 214, 269
Saḥīḥ, 171, 266, 273
Saḥīḥ Būkhārī, 266
Saḥīḥ Muslim, 111, 112
Ṣaḥīḥ Tirmidhī, 273
Sajjād, Imam, 276
Salām, Abū Ubaydah Qasim ibn, 267
Salamah, Umm, 9, 132, 183, 205
Ṣāliḥ, al-Hasan ibn, 13, 76
Sālim, Hishām ibn, 109, 135, 137, 271
Sammān, Ibn al-, 160
Saqīfah, 40, 41, 42, 43, 105, 109, 123
Satan, 41, 65, 67, 95, 123, 152, 270, 273
Ṣawā'iq al-Muḥriqah, al-, 43
Sayyid, 171, 211
Sayyid al-Muslimīn, 22
Sha'bī, al-, 182, 274
Shādhān, Abū al-Hasan Faqih Muhammad ibn Ahmad ibn Ali ibn, 46, 184, 187, 213, 218
Shāfi'ī, ,Ibn al-Maghāzilī al-, 27, 166, 215
Shāfi'ī, 'Allāmah Ḥamwīnī, 171, 189, 230, 231, 237
Shāfi'ī, Ibn Abī al-Ḥadīd Mu'tazilī, 190
Shāfi'ī, Ibn Ḥajar al-Haythamī al-, 160
Shāfi'ī, Mir Sayyid Ali Hamadāni, 202
Shāfi'ī, Muhammad ibn Ṭalḥah, 171, 189, 201
Shāfi'i, Muhammad ibn Ṭalḥi, 266
Shaḥnah, Ibn, 268, 271
Sharḥ al-Maqāṣid, 110
Sharḥ al-Qāmūs, 191, 193, 268
Sharḥ Nahj al-Balāghah, 168, 190, 201, 212, 266, 271, 273, 274, 277
Sharḥ Saḥīḥ al-Būkhāri, 110
sharī'ah, 104, 107
Shawāhid al-Tanzīl, 265, 266
Shaybāni, Mad ibn Ḥanbal, 268
Shi'a, 7, 13, 19, 20, 37, 83, 84, 90, 129, 147, 153, 156, 158, 161, 171, 173, 189, 206, 267, 269, 270, 271
Shī'a dar Islām, 267
Shiqshiqiyyah, Khutbah al-, 43, 268
Shu'bah, Mughīrah ibn, 249
Shubayr, 242
shūrā, 14
Shūshtari, Qāḍi Nūr Allah, 46, 267
Sibṭ, Musā, 267
Ṣiddīq, al-, 267

Ṣiffīn, 84
Sīrah ibn Hishām, 267
Subḥ al-A'shā, 272
Sufyān, 'Utbah ibn Abī, 76, 140, 142, 196, 217, 221, 268, 269
Sulaymān, Muqātil ibn, 161, 233, 266, 274
Sunan al-Bayhaqī, 111, 112, 113
Sunnah, 106, 107, 119, 136, 151, 152, 153, 154, 155, 156, 163
Sunnis, viii, 13, 19, 20, 21, 23, 33, 40, 43, 66, 72, 87, 90, 105, 106, 107, 109, 110, 111, 117, 118, 119, 120, 129, 148, 156, 158, 161, 171, 182, 183, 184, 185, 187, 189, 198, 206, 218, 227, 228, 230, 237, 247, 248, 249, 267, 269, 270, 272, 273
Surah al-Furqān, 23
Suyūṭī, 33, 40, 114, 119, 206, 266

T

Ṭabaqāt al-Shu'arā', 276
Ṭabarānī, Hafiz Abū al-Qāsim Sulaymān ibn Ahmad, 221, 223, 225, 226, 227, 269
Ṭabari, Ahmad ibn Abdullah, 268
Ṭabari, Muhammad ibn Jarir, 267
Ṭabarī, Tārīkh al-, 43, 163, 190, 191, 205, 208, 209, 217, 238, 247, 267
Ṭabarsī, Abū Manṣūr Ahmad ibn Ali ibn Abī Tālib, 188, 274
Ṭabāṭabā'ī, 'Allāmah, 265, 266, 269
Tadhkirah al-Awliyā', 268
Tadhkirah al-Khawāṣ, 216, 276
Tafsir, 265
Tafsīr al-Ayyāshī, 13, 269
Tafsīr al-Būrhān, 7, 9, 10, 11, 13
Tafsir al-Kabir, 272
Tafsīr al-Kashshāf, 266
Tafsīr al-Mizān, 10, 11, 13, 272
Tafsir al-Qur'an, 265
Tafsīr al-Ṣāfi, 269, 270
Taftāzānī, 110
Takhaṣṣuṣ Ali bi-kawnihi Sayyid al-Muslimīn, 190
Takhṣīṣ Ali bi kawnihi min al-Mukhtārayn 'ind Rabb al-'Ālamīn, 227
Ṭalḥah, Ibn Abī al-Ḥadīd and Muhammad ibn, 29, 45, 143, 166, 202
Ṭālib, Ali ibn Abī, i, 8, 9, 10, 13, 15, 17, 20, 22, 23, 24, 27, 28, 29, 30, 43, 46, 47, 67, 84, 85, 86, 88, 93, 104, 107, 110, 117, 122, 129, 134, 138, 140, 141, 142, 143, 147, 156, 157, 158, 160, 161, 162, 163, 166, 168, 169, 171, 172, 173, 174, 177, 182, 183, 184, 185, 186, 187, 188, 189, 190, 194, 195, 196, 197, 198, 199, 202, 203, 205, 206, 207, 208, 209, 210, 212, 213, 214, 215, 216, 217, 218, 219, 220, 221, 223, 227, 228, 229, 230, 231, 232, 233, 234, 235, 237, 238, 241, 242, 243, 244, 245, 246, 247, 248, 249, 265, 269, 270, 271, 272, 274, 275, 276
Tamhīd al-Qawā'id, 111
Tamīm, Banī, 46

Tamīm, Umm, 49, 50
ṭāq, 270
Ṭāq, Abū Ja'far Mu'min al-, 135, 270, 271
Taqi, Imam Muhammad, 154
Tarīkh Abī al-Fidā', 267, 268, 271
Tārīkh al-Khamīs, 267, 268, 271
Tārīkh al-Ṭabarī, 267, 268
Tārīkh al-Ya'qūbī, 268
Tārīkh Dimishq al-Kabīr, 190, 191, 229, 238
Tārīkh Khamīs, 267
Tārīkh Ya'qūbi, 266
Tatimmat al-Muntahā, 266
Tha'labī, 210
Thābit, Zayd ibn, 269
Thaqafī, Abū al-Faraj Yahyā ibn Maḥmūd, 221
Thaqalayn Hadith, 130
Thawrī, Sufyān al-, 217
Tirmidhī, Muhammad ibn Ali al-Ḥakīm al-, 267
Ṭufayl, Abū al-, 238
Tuḥaf al-'Uqūl, 266
Turāb, Abū, 85

U

'Umar, 13, 14, 29, 40, 41, 42, 43, 44, 45, 47, 49, 50, 51, 52, 53, 67, 86, 109, 110, 119, 127, 129, 134, 142, 143, 160, 161, 162, 163, 166, 169, 170, 171, 175, 210, 211, 215, 235, 236, 238, 249, 266, 267, 273, 274
'Ubayda, Abū, 40
Umayyads, 14, 86
Umayyah, Abū, 113
ummahāt al-awlād, 119
Usd al-Ghābah, 171, 273
uṣūl, 111
Uṣūl al-Kāfi, 269, 270, 271
'Uthmān, 14, 15, 42, 46, 117, 143, 161, 162, 166, 171, 188, 189, 212, 216, 217, 219, 234, 237, 249

W

Wahhāb, Zayd ibn, 169
wāḥid, 99
Wajdi, Farid, 268
Walīd, Khālid ibn, 14, 33, 34, 42, 46, 48, 49, 143
Waqqāṣ, Sa'd ibn Abī, 142
Warrāq, Ismā'īl ibn Abān al-, 213
Waṣā'il al-Shī'a, 266
Wasīlah, al-, 214
wilāyah, 190

Y

Ya'qūb, Muhammad ibn, 229
Ya'qūb, Yūnis ibn, 134
Ya'sūb al-Dīn, 193
Yaḥyā, Ahmad ibn, 182
Yamān, Ḥudhayfah ibn al-, 166
Yanābī' al-Mawaddah, 10, 162, 190, 201, 202, 203, 206, 209, 210, 212, 214, 218, 219, 220, 224, 225, 226, 230, 233, 238, 239, 240, 266, 269, 272, 273, 275, 276
Yaqẓān, Abū al-, 33
Yarbū'ī, Mālik ibn Nuwayrah al-Tamīmī al-, 46
Yāsir, 'Ammār ibn, 14, 84, 142
Yazīd, 41, 73, 194, 275

Z

Ẓāhiriyyah Library, 229, 238
Zahrā', 42, 43, 224
zakat, 4, 8, 47, 49, 52, 131, 133
Zamakhsharī, Mahmoud ibn 'Umar, 33, 266, 269
Zayd, Abū Ja'far al-Naqīb Yaḥyā ibn Abī, 114, 271, 274
Zayd, Ṭalḥah ibn, 203
Zayyāt, Muhammad ibn Ali ibn Faḍl al-, 213
zindīq, al-, 133
Ziyādah, Ismā'īl ibn, 208
Zubayr, Abdullah ibn, 29, 142